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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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# Parl stalled as Oppn corners govt over Adani

## Both the Houses were adjourned in minutes without transacting any business

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

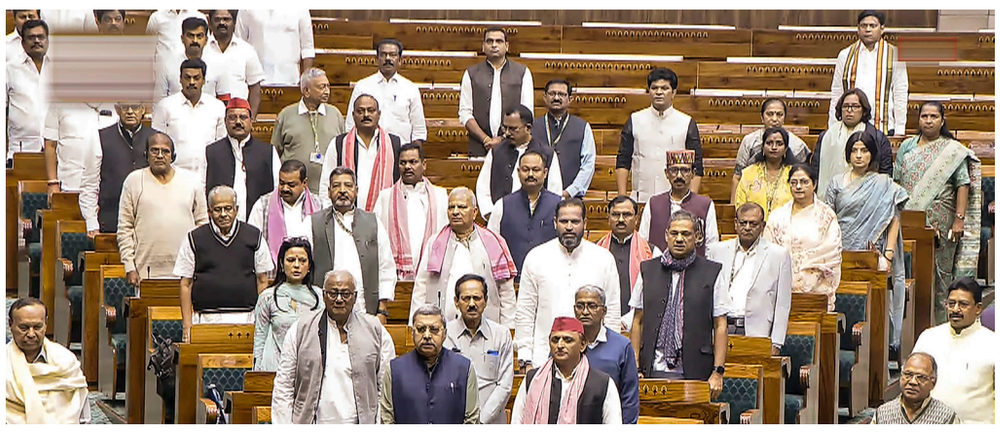
The Winter Session of Parliament got off to a rocky start on Monday with both houses being adjourned within minutes of the commencement of proceedings as the Opposition tried to corner the government on the issue of corruption allegations against the Adani Group and demanded a JPC probe.

Several Opposition MPs had given adjournment notices in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha seeking suspension of the day's listed business to discuss the issue of the indictment of Adani group head Gautam Adani and others in a US court on charges of paying bribes to secure solar power supply contracts. But the notices were disallowed by the Chair, drawing protests from the opposition benches.

Outside Parliament, the opposition INDIA bloc alleged that the government was "'scared" of a discussion on the issue and sought a Joint Parliamentary Committee investigation into the "scam".

They questioned why Parliament was adjourned for the day without transacting any business, after which Lok Sabha officials said it was a convention to adjourn the proceedings of the House for a short duration immediately after making an obituary reference to a sitting member.

There will be no sittings of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on Tuesday to mark the 75th anniversary of Constitution. Both houses will meet again on Wednesday.



Opposition MPs stand for the national anthem in the Lok Sabha during the first day of the Winter session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge expressed dismay over the Chair in both Houses of Parliament disallowing the opposition to raise the Adani issue under Rule 267 and said the government should "let the truth come out" as the matter is affecting the country's image.

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday disallowed 13 notices served under Rule 267, including seven that sought a discussion on Adani. During a meeting of the business advisory committee of the Lok Sabha, Speaker Om Birla asked political parties to avoid a ruckus in the House in the name of protests. Soon after the Lok Sabha met for the day, Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi sought to raise the Sambhal firing issue in Uttar Pradesh, but Birla read out obituary references and adjourned the House.

*—PTI*

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## France's Total halts all investment in Adani Grp

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

French energy giant TotalEnergies SE on Monday said it was not aware of the corruption investigation its partner Adani group's founder chairman was facing in the US and that it is pausing fresh investments in the conglomerate pending the outcome of the charges.

Separately, GQG Partners, which made huge bets on Adani group post hammering it saw in the aftermath of the Hindenburg Report last year, said the indictment is against individuals only and the bet it made on the group holds good. TotalEnergies is one of the biggest foreign investors in billionaire Gautam Adani's business empire. TotalEnergies holds a 19.75 per cent stake in Adani Green Energy Ltd - the renewable energy arm of the Indian group helmed by Gautam Adani. It also has a 50 per cent stake in three joint venture companies that produce electricity from sunlight and wind with AEGL. The French firm also holds a 37.4 per cent stake in Adani Total Gas Ltd.

**PHOTO: PTI**

GQG's exposure to Adani group companies stands at USD 8.1 billion. *—PTI*

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## Centre extends ban on ULFA for 5 years

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

The Centre on Monday extended the ban on the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) for five years for continuing to work with the objective to secede Assam from India and maintaining links with other insurgent groups for extortion and violence. The ULFA was first declared a banned organisation in 1990 and since then the ban has been extended periodically. The outfit has possessed illegal arms and ammunition, indulged in 16 criminal cases, including several cases of explosions or planting of explosives in Assam during the period from 27 November, 2019 to 1 July, 2024. ***—PTI***

## SC raps Delhi officials for lapses in GRAP-4 curbs

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

The Supreme Court of India has reprimanded both the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government and the Delhi police for failing to enforce crucial GRAP-IV measures aimed at combating air pollution. A bench headed by Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih noted a "serious lapse" in the implementation of the guidelines, revealing that police checks at entry points were conducted without concrete instructions. The court has ordered the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to take disciplinary action against negligent officials under Section 14 of the CAQM Act 2021. ***—PTI***

***>>>More on Page 4***

## Internet ban extended for 2 days in Manipur

**IMPHAL, 25 NOV**

The Manipur government has extended the suspension of mobile internet services for an additional two days in nine districts, now set to last until 27 November, as per an order from the Home Department. The affected districts include Imphal West, Imphal East, Kakching, Bishnupur, Thoubal, Churachandpur, Kangpokpi, Pherzawl, and Jiribam. Initially imposed after the recovery of bodies of three women and three children, the suspension was lifted for broadband services on 19 November to alleviate hardships faced by residents, healthcare providers, and educational institutions. ***—PTI***

## Bengaluru DySP charged for 'stripping' Bhovi scam suspect

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

A Deputy Superintendent of Police has been booked after a woman lawyer died by suicide accusing the officer of stripping her while conducting interrogation in Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation scam. She also accused the DySP of demanding Rs 25 lakh as a bribe.

Banashankari police registered a case against Kanakalakshmi, DySP of Criminal Investigation Department, based on a suicide note by 33-year-old lawyer Jeeva S who was found dead at her residence in Raghavendra Layout in the City on 22 November. City Commissioner of Police B Dayananda has ordered an inquiry by Central Crime Branch against the accused police officer.

According to police, on 18 March, 2023, a case was registered at Siddapura police station in the City based on a complaint by one Suryakalavathi KN. She alleged that she paid Rs 25,000 as a bribe to two women of her own locality, Saraswathi and Lakshmi, after Rs 50,000 was credited to her account as a loan from Bhovi Development Corporation in November 2021. In December 2022, the corporation officials told her that she would have to repay for Rs 5 lakh loan taken by her. Suryakalavathi went to the bank and found that Rs 5 lakh was deposited by the Corporation. Of the Rs 5 lakh, Rs 4.75 lakh was transferred to New Dreams Enterprises.

During the course of investigation, several people were interrogated and one among them was advocate Jeeva. Jeeva's sister Sangeetha S alleged that her sister was stripped in order to check whether she carried cyanide. Jeeva, accused of benefiting from misappropriated funds intended for employment schemes under the corporation, left behind an 11-page note accusing Kanakalakshmi of harassment.

Allegedly, Jeeva was interrogated in person on 14 November, despite a High Court directive allowing remote questioning. Her family has claimed this interrogation led to her tragic death.

CID had been probing Jeeva's financial transactions as part of a broader investigation into the misappropriation of Rs 97 crore in government funds between 2021 and 2022. These funds were reportedly transferred to fake beneficiaries under an employment scheme. A CID officer said, "The questioning was based on evidence collected in the scam investigation."

*—Salar News with Agencies*

Security deployed to maintain law and order in Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

## SP MP booked, 25 held in Sambhal riots

**SAMBHAL/ NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

> **Uttar Pradesh government orchestrated the riots in Sambhal. When our MP Zia-ur-Rehman was not even in Sambhal why has an FIR been filed against him**
>
> —Akhilesh Yadav, SP Chief

The violence erupted in Sambhal of Uttar Pradesh over a court-order on the survey Qof the Shahi Jama Masjid has led the police to file seven First Information Reports (FIRs) booking several people. Among those named in the complaints are Samajwadi Party MP Zia-ur-Rehman Barq and the son of local MLA Iqbal Mehmood, Sohail Iqbal. The unrest has tragically resulted in three confirmed deaths, with reports suggesting the actual toll may be higher, as officials continue to investigate.

In an effort to quell the disturbance, local authorities have suspended internet services and imposed prohibitory orders in the area until November 30. A magisterial inquiry is underway, while businesses gradually reopen amid heightened police presence. Tensions began escalating on 19 November, coinciding with the initiation of the mosque survey, amidst claims that a temple once occupied the site. The management committee of the Jama Masjid has accused local authorities and police of inciting the violence, asserting that their actions led to at least four fatalities. Committee president Zafar Ali stated that the survey was unlawfully mandated by the District Magistrate, lacking proper court approval. He particularly highlighted the roles of Sub-Divisional Magistrate Vandana Mishra and Circle Officer Anuj Kumar, alleging that the SDM's decision to drain an ablution tank incited panic among residents. Akhilesh Yadav, SP Chief, accused the Uttar Pradesh government, claiming it orchestrated the violence to distract from recent bypoll irregularities. *—PTI*

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## SC bins pleas against secular in Preamble

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

In a landmark verdict, the Supreme Court on Monday dismissed the pleas challenging the 1976 amendment to the Constitution adding terms "socialist", "secular" and "integrity" to the preamble, observing Parliament's amending power extended to Preamble too.

Rejecting the pleas on grounds, including the delay of over 44 years, the top court said terms like "socialist" and "secular" were "integral to the Preamble" making the "prayers particularly questionable".

Authoring the verdict, the Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna said, "We do not find any legitimate cause or justification for challenging this constitutional amendment after nearly 44 years. The circumstances do not warrant this court's exercise of discretion to undertake an exhaustive examination, as the constitutional position remains unambiguous, negating the need for a detailed academic pronouncement."

*—PTI*

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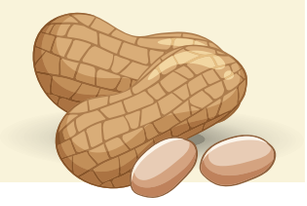
## KADLEKAI PARISHE

A huge crowd gathers at Kadlekai Parishe on Bull Temple Road in Basavangudi, Bengaluru, on Monday. The event, which attracts visitors from across the city, was inaugurated by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**



## In biggest haul, ICG seizes 6,000kg of meth in Andaman

**PORT BLAIR, 25 NOV**

In the biggest major anti-narcotics operation, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) apprehended a vessel carrying six Myanmarese crew members and seized 6,000 kg of contraband Methamphetamine near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The drugs, packed in approximately 3,000 packets of 2 kg each, are estimated to be worth several crores of rupees in the international market.

On 23 November, a pilot from a Coast Guard Dornier aircraft, while conducting routine patrols, identified a suspicious fishing trawler near Barren Island, situated nearly 150km from Port Blair. The trawler was warned to reduce its speed, and in the meantime, the pilot alerted the Andaman and Nicobar Command. Promptly, nearby fast patrolling vessels were dispatched to Barren Island, towing the fishing trawler to Port Blair on 24 November for further investigations.

**PHOTO: PTI**

The Coast Guard has arrested six Myanmarese nationals from the fishing trawler, with authorities believing that the Methamphetamine was intended for the Indian market and its neighbouring countries.

The Andaman and Nicobar Police have been notified for a joint interrogation of the suspects. *—PTI*

**ON AUSTRALIAN SOIL**

## *Bumrah leads India to biggest Test win*

**PERTH, 25 NOV**

Jasprit Bumrah led a feisty bunch of Indian cricketers to their most dominant Test victory on Australian soil, winning by a massive 295 runs in a remarkable turnaround that will find a pride of place among the country's golden moments in international cricket.

The stand-in skipper led by example with a match-haul of 8/72 as India bowled out the hosts, who were in pursuit of a mammoth 534, for 238 in 58.4 overs on the fourth afternoon of the opening Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy here. The victory propelled India back to the top of World Test Championship standings with 61.11 percentage points. India's previous biggest winning margin in terms of runs was 222 during a 1977-78 series game in Melbourne when Australia played an under-strength side due to mass exodus for Kerry Packer World Series.

India are now 1-0 up in the five-Test series with regular skipper Rohit Sharma ready to take over during Day/Night game starting 6 December in Adelaide. While Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli and KL Rahul will be among the heroes with their solid second innings batting performances, it was Bumrah's unbelievable skill-set and self-belief during Australia's first innings rout that formed the cornerstone of India's win. *—PTI*

**PHOTO: PTI**

Bumrah said the Indian dressing room remained a nerve-free space

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PHOTO: FREEPIK

## Complaint filed over comments against deities

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

Akhila Karnataka Brahmin Mahasabha filed a complaint with Mahalakshmi Layout police against an unknown social media user for allegedly posting derogatory comments regarding Hindu deities on the X platform (previously Twitter). As per the complaint, inflammatory comments against Sringeri, Annapoorneshwari, Sharadamba and Kollur Mookambika Devi were posted using a social media account bearing the name "Anjum Sheikh". Mahasabha President Nagendra Bhatt requested police to trace the accused and take immediate action against him. Police have launched an investigation. *—Salar News*

## City to face power outages today, tomorrow

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

Many areas in City may face power disruptions on Tuesday and Wednesday due to maintenance works undertaken by Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM). Areas including RPC Layout, Hosahalli and Vijayanagar will face power outages between 10.30am and 1.30pm on Tuesday, as per the notification. Similarly, Kurubahalli, Thadikavagilu and surrounding areas will experience power cuts between 10am and 12pm. On Wednesday, areas around MC Layout and Industrial Area may face power outages between 10.30am and 1.30pm. *—Salar News*

## 6 artists of 'Kantara' movie injured as bus overturns

**UDUPI, 25 NOV**

Six junior artists belonging to Kannada hit film 'Kantara' were injured when their bus overturned in Karnataka, as reported by local police. The incident occurred near Jadkal on Sunday night while the crew was returning to Kollur after completing a shoot in Mudoor. The mini-bus, which was carrying 20 junior artistes, flipped over during the journey. The injured individuals were quickly rushed to hospitals in Jadkal and Kundapur for treatment. Authorities from the Kollur police are currently investigating the circumstances surrounding the accident. *—PTI*

## City cops search Kerala college in fraud case

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

City police conducted a search at the Karakonam Medical College premises in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday in a medical admission fraud case involving Bennet Abraham, the college director. Abraham, a former CPI candidate, has been accused of duping parents by collecting Rs 7.22 crore under the false promise of securing MBBS seats for their children at his college. Multiple complaints were filed against him with the Malleswaram police, leading to an investigation that was later escalated to Enforcement Directorate in 2022. However, Abraham has been on the run since the case came to light, and ED recently filed a chargesheet. According to sources, the police arrived at Karakonam College on Monday with a court order to search the premises. This marks the second time Bengaluru police have travelled to Kerala in connection with the ongoing investigation. Authorities are expected to continue their search at other locations, including Abraham's residence. *—Salar News*

# Bill designed to 'usurp' Waqf properties: AIMPLB

## JPC not doing its job honestly, says AIMPLB spokesperson

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) on Monday alleged that the Centre's Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, was crafted to "usurp" the Waqf properties across the country.

AIMPLB spokesperson SQR Ilyas accused the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on Waqf of not doing its job honestly. "Boards' convention felt that Waqf Amendment Bill 2024 was cannily crafted to usurp the waqf properties spread throughout the country," he said.

Ilyas was addressing a press conference regarding the 29th convention of the AIMPLB, which concluded on Sunday in Bengaluru. He said all proposed 44 amendments and their sub-sections were designed to "destroy and manipulate" the status of the Waqf properties.

He claimed that the JPC, which was formed to elicit suggestions of stakeholders, is giving time and attention to those with "no locus standi on the issue and is behaving in a partisan way and violating rules and norms.

All proposed 44 amendments to Waqf Bill were designed to "destroy and manipulate" the status of Waqf properties, AIMPLB said *PHOTO: X*

"We feel that the JPC is not doing its job honestly," he said.

Citing previous occasions, he alleged that this was the first time that the bill was brought without consultation with any Muslim organisations.

According to him, a delegation of AIMPLB met the full committee and presented its objections to the bill. The delegation also submitted a 211-page document based on its study of the bill.

Ilyas said the JPC invited suggestions from all the citizens of the entire country instead of the stakeholders. He warned, "In spite of all our efforts, our oppositions, if the bill is passed... then the Muslims will be compelled to take all the possible measures within the limits of the Constitution of India. They will take all legal, constitutional and democratic steps" to pressurise the Union government to withdraw the amendments.

The AIMPLB has decided to stage a protest before the Parliament as well as state assemblies, he said. *—PTI*

## Yatnal supporters launch anti-Waqf Board march

**BIDAR, 25 NOV**

Vijayapura BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal's supporters on Monday kick-started the much touted march against Waqf Board after eviction notices were served to farmers and allegedly some religious places in the state.

On Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's direction, all such notices have been withdrawn and cancelled.

The month-long event started on Monday from Bidar in North Karnataka and would go up to Chamarajanagar in southern most Karnataka.

The concluding ceremony would take place in Bengaluru on 25 December, according to Yatnal.

An open critic of senior BJP leader BS Yediyurappa and his family, Yatnal had often demanded that the party central command should put an end to 'dynastic politics' for an effective fight against the Gandhi family in Congress.

The month-long march is seen as an answer to the state BJP unit's 'fact finding team' visiting Yatnal's constituency to understand the problems faced by farmers in Vijayapura who had received notices from the district administration to evict land allegedly belonging to Waqf Board. *—PTI*

## Fighting back is only option: CM's aide

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

Naseer Ahmed, Congress MLC and Chief Minister's Political Secretary, said AIMPLB along with scholars and leaders from the community would oppose the Waqf (Amendment) Bill. Ahmed said the community was left with no other option but to fight against the Bill. "Scholars from Delhi Muslim Personal Law Board will hold a meet to discuss the Bill," he said. *—ANI*

**BYPOLL FALLOUT**

# 12 JD(S) legislators disgruntled with party, says Ibrahim

**MYSURU, 25 NOV**

JD(S) expelled leader CM Ibrahim on Monday said Channapatna byelection results must be an eye-opener for the party. JD(S) State President HD Kumaraswamy must learn lessons now and stop converting the party into a family company, Ibrahim added.

Around 12 JD(S) legislators, including State party core committee President GT Devegowda, were dissatisfied with the party's situation. "I am working to bring them together. I convinced GT Devegowda to remain in the party when he planned to join Congress before Assembly polls. He would have become a minister in the State had I not held back him before the polls," Ibrahim said.

Ibrahim said though he and Devegowda worked shoulder to shoulder to strengthen the party by touring across the State, the latter was cornered in the party now. "Though I am expelled from JD(S), I can revive the party if both Kumaraswamy and former prime minister HD Devegowda come out of NDA."

The former JD(S) state president said Kumaraswamy was elected from Channapatna Assembly constituency before by spending Rs 4 crore and garnering the support of Muslims like him. "Though he spent Rs 150 crore now, he failed to elect his son Nikhil Kumaraswamy in Channapatna bypolls," he said.

CM Ibrahim *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

> **I am working to bring them (disgruntled lawmakers) together. I convinced GT Devegowda to remain in the party when he planned to join Congress before Assembly polls. He would have become a minister in the State had I not held back him before the polls**
>
> —CM Ibrahim, JD(S) expelled leader

Ibrahim has plans to float new party: GTD

GT Devegowda said Ibrahim, who met him at his residence here on Monday, conveyed to him about floating a new party and third front in the State including disgruntled MLAs of all parties. "I told him that such measures needed more party workers to build and strengthen the party. He said Ibrahim would meet him again after touring the State, collecting the opinion from various quarters.

*—Salar News*

# Transport staff warn of strike over dues

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

Employees attached to State transport corporations have warned of going on a strike, citing the government's failure to disburse 38 months of pending arrears and gratuity payments to the workers.

Despite promises of a salary hike from January 2024, the government took no action on it, said transport union leaders Ananth Subbarao and HS Manjunath. The unions represent four State transport corporations - Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation, Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation, North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation and Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation.

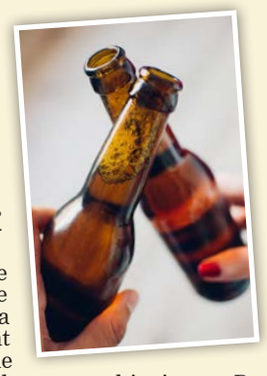
Besides, those who have retired are awaiting their gratuity payments totalling Rs 399.29 crores. Including this, arrears total up to Rs 1,750 crore, they said.

Following a meeting held between the employees and union leaders in the City last week, the latter reminded Chief Minister of a previous strike that ended with a promise to meet their demands. "We have told the employees not to take the law into their own hands and we will announce the date of the strike. Our strike will not be called off until our demands are met," Subbarao said.

Union leader Manjunath said they have submitted their demands and sent dozens of letters to the government. "Despite meetings and warnings, there has been no response. How long can transport employees wait patiently? We are left with no choice but to strike," he said. *—Salar News*

## STATE SHELVES BEER PRICE HIKE TO COUNTER WINTER REVENUE DIP

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**



Aiming to prevent a decline in excise revenue during the winter season, State government has frozen a proposed hike for beer prices until January.

This comes as beer consumption typically drops in colder months, with consumers favouring warmer alternatives.

A proposal for a beer price increase was submitted by Excise Department following which a draft was issued by the government for price revision. However, the Excise Department, tasked with achieving a Rs 36,000 crore revenue target for the fiscal year, chose to hold off on revisions to avoid further dampening sales.

Despite being halfway through the fiscal year, the department has achieved less than half its target in sales, according to a source. Officials believe maintaining current beer prices will help stabilise revenue collection during the winter period. *—Salar News*

## Mechanical jumbo used in temple fest for 1st time

**KOLAR, 25 NOV**

The mechanical elephant conceptualised by PETA took part in a procession for the first time in Karnataka at Sri Madh Nagalapura Veera Samstana Mutt at Nagalapura off Bengaluru-Chennai National Highway on Monday. The mechanical elephant took part in the annual Rathothsava for the first time and went around the premises of the mutt much to the delight of the devotees.

Life-size mechanical elephants are aimed at preventing temples and other religious places from using real elephants, thus allowing the original ones to live harmoniously in their natural habitat, said Kushboo Gupta, Director of Advocacy Projects, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

PETA India coined the idea of replacing live elephants in temples at the beginning of 2023 through a donation of a mechanical elephant to Irinjadappilly Sri Krishna Temple in Thrissur, Kerala. Now, at least 10 mechanical elephants are used in temples across south India, of which PETA India donated six such elephants.

Mechanical elephants have a height of 3 metres and weigh 800kg. . *—Salar News*

DK Shivakumar *PHOTO: ANI*

## BJP, JD(S) workers realise their future lies in Cong: DKS

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said on Monday that BJP and JD(S) workers were realising that their future lies with Congress. Citing voting patterns in Assembly bypolls, the KPCC President said Congress gained significantly in Shiggaon and Channapatna constituencies. "Such a tectonic shift is impossible without the support of BJP and JD(S) voters," he said, responding to whether these parties backed Congress in the byelection.

On BJP's protests over the Waqf issue, Shivakumar accused them of seeking publicity. "Their protests help us expose their dual nature. This is a distraction from their internal conflicts, which people have already rejected," he said. He dismissed factionalism within BJP as their internal issue, adding, "For us, BJP is one unit, and JD(S) is part of BJP."

Responding to JD(S) candidate Nikhil Kumaraswamy blaming his defeat in Channapatna on the lack of Muslim support, Shivakumar said, "Why would Muslims support them when they align with BJP?"

On EVM hacking allegations in Maharashtra, Shivakumar said he would discuss the matter during his upcoming Delhi visit, calling it a national concern. *—Salar News*

## Tax officer dismissed for 'extortion'

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

A 29-year-old tax inspector was dismissed after she was accused of kidnapping and extorting four businessmen of Rs 1.5 crore in City.

Sonali Sahay, Intelligence Officer with Bengaluru South Commissionerate, along with Goods and Services Tax officers Abhishek Kumar, Manoj Saini and Nagesh Babu allegedly posed as Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials. They then raided the residence of businessman Keshav Tak of Mexo Solutions in GM Palya in the City in August. Sahay and her accomplices then kidnapped Tak and his three associates.

They demanded Rs 3 crore in ransom but released the victims after receiving Rs 1.5 crore.

A case regarding the incident was registered with the Byappanahalli police, and was later transferred to Central Crime Branch, Bengaluru.

The dismissal order issued by the Commissioner of Central Tax, Bengaluru South Commissionerate described the act as one of "moral turpitude," stating that Sahay and her accomplices "terrorised the victims, assaulted them, and used intimidation to extract money." *—Salar News*

**RS 69L FRAUD**

# *HC denies quashing of FIR in Amazon case*

**BENGALURU, 25 NOV**

The Karnataka High Court has dismissed a petition seeking the quashing of a first information report (FIR) against two individuals accused of defrauding e-commerce giant Amazon of over Rs 69 lakh. Justice M Nagaprasanna characterised the case as a demonstration of "modern age crime."

The petitioners, Sourish Bose and Deepanvita Ghosh, aimed to have both the FIR and a magistrate court's cognisance order set aside. The allegations date back to 2017 when an Amazon employee uncovered their purported fraudulent activities, which reportedly spanned several years.

According to the complaint, Bose allegedly ordered high-end products from Amazon using his bank account, having them delivered to Ghosh's address. He would then request a return within 24 hours. After securing a refund, he reportedly replaced the genuine items with low-cost imitations, re-packaging them for return to Amazon. The prosecution noted that the return addresses were sometimes linked to Ghosh's residence and at other times to various locations across Bengaluru.

Bose and Ghosh face charges under Section 420 (cheating) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 66D of the Information Technology Act, which deals with online fraud. Their petition to dismiss the case has been firmly rejected by the High Court. *—PTI*

## PARAMESHWARA TALKING LIKE RAHUL: JOSHI

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

Union Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi has taken aim at Home Minister G Parameshwara for making comments about electronic voting machines (EVMs) that he likens to those of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. This remark follows Parameshwara's allegations that EVMs were "selectively" hacked during the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections, despite the Congress party's recent electoral victories in Karnataka and Jharkhand.

Speaking to ANI outside Parliament at the start of the winter session, Joshi expressed disappointment in Parameshwara's statements, stating, "I had this impression that he is a mature person, but he is also talking like Rahul Gandhi." Joshi asserted that the BJP maintained its central power even while Congress claimed victory in various states.

Parameshwara said that he and other party leaders had examined the alleged EVM issues and are preparing to approach the Election Commission of India. *—ANI*

PHOTO: X

## Cong accuses IPS officer Shukla of MCC violation

MUMBAI, 25 NOV

The Congress on Monday demanded that the Election Commission (EC) take action against IPS officer Rashmi Shukla for allegedly violating the model code of conduct during the Maharashtra assembly elections by meeting Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. The Congress's chief spokesperson, Atul Londhe, claimed Shukla met Fadnavis, the state home minister, when the model code of conduct was in place. The IPS officer reportedly met Fadnavis at his official residence on the evening of 23 November, the day votes were counted. Earlier this month, the EC had directed the Maharashtra government to transfer DGP Rashmi Shukla with immediate effect following complaints from political parties, including the Congress. *—PTI*

## Women protest against AFSPA in Manipur

IMPHAL, 25 NOV

Defying curfew orders, thousands of women held a rally in Manipur's Imphal East district on Monday demanding the repeal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) 1958 from the state. The rally organised by local clubs and Meira Paibis in the district raised slogans and held placards calling for "removal of AFSPA from the state" and to "stop imposition of the draconian law" and "stop killing of women and children" in the northeastern state. The rally commenced from Kongba Bazaar but was stopped after 3km by a huge contingent of security forces at Konung Mamang, just one kilometre away from the Chief Minister's Secretariat. The demonstrators later returned to Kongba for a public meeting. *—PTI*

## Bihar a failed state: Prashant Kishor in US

WASHINGTON DC, 25 NOV

Jan Suraaj leader Prashant Kishor has said Bihar is "literally a failed state" which is in "deep shit" and tremendous efforts are required for its all-round development. In a virtual interaction with the Bihari diaspora community after the launch of the US chapter of Jan Suraaj, the former poll strategist exuded confidence that his party would win the 2025 Bihar Assembly polls and said that he would lift the ban on alcohol and use the revenue to improve education. "We have to realise that this (Bihar) is a state which is in deep shit. If Bihar were a country, it would be the 11th largest country in terms of population in the world. We have just overtaken Japan in terms of population," Kishor said. *—PTI*

## Didi elevates TMC veterans, new roles for Abhishek

KOLKATA, 25 NOV

TMC chief Mamata Banerjee on Monday formed several disciplinary committees at different levels, consisting of veteran loyalists, and gave additional responsibilities to national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee as the spokesperson for national affairs, underscoring the party's reliance on seasoned members to shape its strategic direction. In a significant move, the party also elevated five veteran leaders including assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee, state minister Manas Bhunia and party MP Kalyan Banerjee, to the party's all-powerful working committee. Notably, party MP and Banerjee's nephew Abhishek, considered the party's de facto number two and who has been a key figure in the party's growth, will also serve as the official spokesperson for national affairs. *—PTI*

# Govt avoiding talks on Adani row: Oppn

### Kharge accuses PM of ruining country's image

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

The government does not want a public debate on the Adani issue, Opposition leaders said on Monday as both Houses of Parliament were adjourned for the day amid demand for the suspension of business to take up the matter for discussion.

On Monday, leaders from several Opposition parties gave adjournment notices for discussion on the issue of the indictment of Adani group founder chairman Gautam Adani and others in a US court on bribery charges.

"Yesterday, at the all-party meeting, the whole of the opposition proposed to take up a discussion on the bribe allegations against the Adani group. The charge is on Adani, but the BJP is feeling the pain," Deputy Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Pramod Tiwari said.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge expressed dismay over the Chair in both Houses of Parliament. Kharge accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of spoiling the country's image by "helping" some key businessmen get contracts abroad, and demanded a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into the allegations.

Kharge, who was among the seven that sought a discussion on the Adani bribery issue, said if the listed business is suspended, the Opposition parties can explain how the "very important" issue was impacting the entire country. At this point, Dhankhar ordered that nothing that Kharge says will go on record. Lok Sabha MP from the Congress KC Venugopal said, "They are very much scared of discussing the Adani issue. They are not even ready to hear one word from the opposition on the issue." *—PTI*

Indian Youth Congress protest demanding the arrest of Gautam Adani over corruption allegations, in New Delhi, on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

### Oppn seek extension in tenure of Parl Committee on Waqf Bill

Opposition members of the Joint Committee on the Waqf Amendment Bill met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla with a complaint against panel chairman Jagadambika Pal, accusing him of bulldozing the proceedings. In a memorandum to the Speaker, the opposition members also sought an extension of the tenure of the Joint Committee of Parliament by a "reasonable time" to allow substantive deliberations on the expansive legislation. *—PTI*

# Rejected leaders seek Parl control: PM

### PM flays Oppn over hooliganism in House

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday slammed the Opposition, saying those rejected by people 80-90 times were trying to control Parliament by resorting to hooliganism for their own political gains.

Addressing reporters ahead of the start of the Winter Session of Parliament, Modi said such handful of people did not succeed in their intentions but people of the country observed their actions and punished them at an appropriate time.

"There should be a healthy debate in the Parliament but, unfortunately, certain individuals are trying to control Parliament for their own political gains, resorting to disruptions and chaos," Modi said."Though their tactics ultimately fail, the people watch their behaviour closely and deliver justice when the time comes," he added.

Modi said he had been repeatedly urging opposition colleagues, and some also agreed that Parliament should function smoothly.

**Engineer Rashid seeks interim bail to attend Parl**

Jammu and Kashmir MP Engineer Rashid on Monday moved a Delhi court seeking interim bail in a terror-funding case to attend the Parliament session. Rashid was elected from the Baramulla constituency in the Lok Sabha elections and has been lodged in Tihar Jail since 2019 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the 2017 terror-funding case. The special court also sent to the district judge an application filed by Rashid seeking regular bail in the case. The district court would resume hearing the matters on 27 November. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the media on the first day of the Winter session of Parliament, in New Delhi, on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

### Lok Sabha members to use digital pens to mark attendance

Lok Sabha members attending the Winter Session of Parliament beginning Monday will have the option of marking their attendance using a digital pen on an electronic tab. Electronic tabs will be kept at four counters in the lobby of the Lok Sabha chamber as part of Speaker Om Birla's initiative to make Parliament paperless. Earlier, Lok Sabha members marked their attendance using a mobile app. *—PTI*

# No 'formula' under discussion for CM's post, says Ajit Pawar

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 25 NOV

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Monday said no "formula" was being discussed for the chief minister's post and a decision on it will be taken together by the Mahayuti partners.

Speaking to reporters here, NCP leader Pawar also said the Mahayuti got such a huge mandate and the MVA did not even have enough numbers to stake claim for the leader of opposition's post in the state assembly.

Pawar also acknowledged the contribution of the government's Ladki Bahin scheme, which provides financial assistance to women, in the Mahayuti's victory in the just-concluded state assembly polls.

He also paid tributes to Maharashtra's first chief minister Yashwantrao Chavan at his memorial 'Pritisangam' in Karad on his death anniversary. Meanwhile, Shivaji Patil, an independent MLA-designate declared his support to the ruling BJP in the state, a party functionary said on Monday.

Manoj Shinde, a Congress rebel who was suspended by the Congress after he refused to withdraw his nomination from the Kopri-Pachpakhadi seat, joined the Shiv Sena. Meanwhile, Maharashtra minister Deepak Kesarkar said his party legislators feel Eknath Shinde should continue as the chief minister, where the ruling Mahayuti scored a landslide victory in the assembly polls. In another development, Former Maharashtra minister Aaditya Thackeray was on Monday elected the Shiv Sena (UBT) legislature party leader at a meeting of the party legislators in Mumbai. *—PTI*

Ajit Pawar *PHOTO: PTI*

## Raut demands re-election in Maharashtra

MUMBAI, 25 NOV

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut on Monday demanded a re-election in Maharashtra using ballot papers, alleging irregularities in the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs).

Talking to reporters, Raut cited several complaints about EVMs malfunctioning and questioned the integrity of the recently held elections.

"We have received nearly 450 complaints regarding EVMs. Despite raising objections repeatedly, no action has been taken on these issues. How can we say these elections were conducted fairly? Hence, I demand that the results be set aside and elections be held again using ballot papers," Raut said.

Citing some instances, Raut said a candidate in Nashik reportedly received only four votes despite his family polling 65 votes, while in Dombivli, discrepancies were found in EVM tallies but election officials refused to acknowledge the objections.

Asked about the MVA's poor performance in the elections, Raut said, "We fought as a united MVA. We need to analyse the reasons behind the failure." *—PTI*

**'MARCH TO DELHI'**

Farmers attend a meeting to discuss their 6 December 'March to Delhi' protest, in New Delhi, on Monday. The farmers will protest against the Centre for not holding talks with them over their demands, which include a legal guarantee of MSP for crops *PHOTO: PTI*

# BJP's Surendran faces heat for Palakkad loss

T'PURAM/KOZHIKODE, 25 NOV

- Youth Congress state president Rahul Mamkootathil won the Palakkad seat with a margin of over 18,000 votes, even making inroads into BJP stronghold areas

Trouble is brewing within Kerala BJP over significant vote loss in the Palakkad Assembly bypoll, with some party leaders questioning the candidate selection for the constituency, which is considered a saffron stronghold.

Amid mounting criticism from the state unit, BJP state chief K Surendran on Monday said in Kozhikode that he took the moral responsibility for the setback. "If there was any mistake on my side, it should be audited. It will be audited. There will be no obstacle from my side in this regard," he said.

Although Surendran did not directly dismiss media reports suggesting his willingness to step down as state president of the party, the BJP's national leadership firmly supported the Kerala unit and its chief.

Rejecting reports that Surendran had expressed willingness to quit taking moral responsibility for the defeat in Palakkad, the BJP accused the CPI(M)-led LDF and the Congress-led UDF of "spreading rumours.""Nobody is resigning, neither (the) party has sought anybody's resignation. I think this will settle the matter," senior BJP leader and party's Kerala in-charge Prakash Javadekar said. Youth Congress state president Rahul Mamkootathil won the Palakkad seat with a margin of over 18,000 votes, even making inroads into BJP stronghold areas, delivering a shock to BJP, which had been hoping to win the seat after finishing second in the past few elections. *—PTI*

## TMC MP ASKS CONG TO SET ASIDE 'EGO', BATS FOR DIDI AS INDIA LEADER

KOLKATA, 25 NOV

Bolstered by the TMC's clean sweep in the West Bengal Assembly bypolls, senior party leader and MP Kalyan Banerjee asked the Congress to "set aside its ego" and recognise Mamata Banerjee as the leader of the INDIA bloc. He also criticised the Congress for its poll debacle in Maharashtra.

Kalyan emphasised the need for "unified and decisive" leadership to challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP, drawing confidence from the TMC's impressive performance in the recent by-elections. The TMC retained five Assembly seats in West Bengal and snatched Madarihat from BJP.

The TMC MP said Mamata Banerjee's "proven leadership and grassroots connect" made her the "most suitable" figurehead for the Opposition alliance. *—PTI*

# Telangana rejects Adani's ₹100cr to Skill University

HYDERABAD, 25 NOV

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday said the state government would not accept the Rs 100-crore donation announced by Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani for the Young India Skill University being set up in the state.

The decision was taken since Adani's announcement evoked "unnecessary discussions" that the donation may appear like a favour to the state government or the CM, Reddy said. So far the government has not accepted a single rupee into its account from any organisation, including Adani Group, he said.

Reddy said the letter clearly requested the Adani Foundation not to transfer Rs 100 crore to the university, saying, "Due to the (present) situation and controversies, the Telangana government is not ready to accept the Rs 100-crore donation you (Adani) generously offered."

Reddy said that the amount proposed by Adani was part of the company's Corporate Social Responsibility activities. *—PTI*

Revanth Reddy *PHOTO: PTI*

**ADR REPORT**

# *'88% of J'khand's new MLAs crorepatis'*

RANCHI, 25 NOV

A whopping 88 per cent of the newly elected MLAs in Jharkhand are 'crorepatis' – Rameshwar Oraon of the Congress is the richest legislator with total assets worth Rs 42.20 crore, said a report released on Monday.

The Jharkhand Election Watch and the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) analysed the affidavits of 80, out of 81 winning candidates, and found that 71 newly elected MLAs in 2024 are 'crorepatis', which is 20 per cent higher than the number of such legislators elected in 2019.

Of the 81 MLAs elected five years ago, 56 were 'crorepatis', and there were 41 in 2014, said the report.

Of the 71 'crorepati' MLAs this year, 28 are from JMM, 20 from BJP, 14 from Congress, four from RJD, two from CPI(ML) Liberation and one each from LJP (Ram Vilas), JD(U) and AJSU Party.

The JMM won 34 assembly seats, and its allies Congress 16, RJD four and CPI(ML) Liberation two constituencies.

BJP's Kushwaha Shashi Bhushan Mehta, who secured the Panki constituency, is the second richest winning candidate with total assets of Rs 32.15 crore, while RJD's Sanjay Prasad Yadav, who bagged the Godda seat, is the third on the list with total assets of Rs 29.59 crore, according to it. Loktantrik Krantikari Morcha's Jairam Kumar Mahato has the lowest assets worth around Rs 2.55 lakh. *—PTI*

Of the 81 MLAs elected five years ago, 56 were crorepatis and there were 41 in 2014, said the report *PHOTO: PTI*

# Death roll rises to 4 in Sambhal violence

## Sambhal tense as prohibitory orders issued, outsiders' entry barred till 30 Nov

**SAMBHAL, 25 NOV**

The death toll from violent clashes that erupted during protests against a court-ordered survey of a Mughal-era mosque has risen to four, following the death of another injured individual. The district administration has since imposed strict prohibitory orders, barring the entry of outsiders until November 30.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Muniraj confirmed that a fourth person succumbed to injuries from the unrest. The identity of the latest victim has yet to be disclosed. Previously, three men—Naeem, Bilal, and Nauman—aged approximately 25, lost their lives during the incidents on Sunday.

District Magistrate Rajender Pensiya announced that the prohibitory measures were enacted under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), stating, "No outsiders, social organisations, or public representatives will enter the district without permission from the competent officer." Any violation will attract penalties outlined in Section 223 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the BNS.

Violence erupted when groups of protesters clashed with police as the court-sanctioned survey of the Jama Masjid got underway. Protesters set vehicles ablaze and hurled stones at security personnel, who responded with tear gas and batons. Reports indicate that shots were fired by some protesters; several police officers, including a PRO who sustained a gunshot wound to the leg, were among the injured.

Following the unrest, 21 individuals, including two women, have been detained, with investigations currently ongoing.

Authorities warned that those responsible could face charges under the National Security Act (NSA). —*PTI*

The district administration has since imposed strict prohibitory orders, barring the entry of outsiders until 30 November **PHOTO: PTI**

### Youth beaten and forced to chant Jai Shri Ram, police deny claims

**MEERUT, 25 NOVEMBER**

A youth has reportedly been beaten and stripped by three individuals in Meerut, and forced to chant "Jai Shri Ram." However, police have dismissed claims of the youth being stripped, suggesting the incident may stem from personal enmity. The alleged assault occurred around 8 PM on Saturday when Gulfam, a resident of Sofipur village, was returning home from a private shooting range. His father, Aftab, claims Gulfam was taken to Victoria Park, where he was attacked, stripped, and coerced to chant. Despite family reports of Gulfam losing consciousness after

### Violence in Etah over construction near Waqf land

**ETAH, 25 NOV**

A violent clash broke out after a group of people opposed construction work on a plot of private land near a dargah in Jalesar town claiming it to be Waqf property, officials said on Monday.

The incident on Sunday evening left several people injured and caused significant property damage, they said, adding two accused have been arrested and a case lodged against 16 named suspects and around 150 unidentified others.

The clash occurred when individuals, allegedly led by accused Rafiq, attempted to stop construction on a plot of land owned by Anil Kumar Upadhyay and others, according to police.

Claiming the land as Waqf property, the group demolished a boundary wall with hammers, damaged over a dozen vehicles, and engaged in stone pelting, the police said.

On Monday, police arrested Rafiq, the alleged mastermind, and sent him to judicial custody, according to officials.

"Two key accused, identified as Farmaan alias Bunty and Rafiq, son of Abdul Latif, have been arrested. We will not tolerate any breach of law and order," he said. —*PTI*

Security patrols the violence-hit area a day after clashes and stone pelting in Sambhal on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

### BJP creating rift among Hindus, Muslims: RaGa

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV 25**

Following violent clashes in Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh, which left four dead and numerous injured, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has alleged the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for allegedly exploiting power to exacerbate Hindu-Muslim tensions. The violence erupted during protests against a court-ordered survey of the Shahi Jama Masjid, leading to confrontations between demonstrators and police.

Gandhi expressed his condolences to those affected and condemned the "biased and hasty attitude" of the state government for inciting further unrest. He stated, "The BJP's use of power to create a rift between Hindu and Muslim communities is neither in the interest of the state nor the country," and urged the Supreme Court to intervene and ensure justice.

Echoing his sentiments, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra accused the Yogi Adityanath-led government of fostering division and called for calm among the public. She emphasised that the government's actions lacked due process and sensitivity to community sentiments.

In the aftermath of the clashes, prohibitory orders have been enforced in Sambhal until November 30, and internet services were temporarily suspended. The local administration has faced scrutiny as police registered seven FIRs related to the violence, implicating several local politicians. The Congress party denounced the "well-planned conspiracy" purportedly orchestrated by the BJP-RSS to disturb peace in the region. —*PTI*

### Prohibitory orders imposed in Jajpur after attack on MLA

**JAJPUR, 25 NOV**

The Jajpur district administration has imposed prohibitory orders in Jajpur town after an alleged attack on Dharmasala MLA Himanshu Sekhar Sahoo on the evening of 20 November. The order was enacted under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) in the Jajpur police station and Biraja Haat areas, following heightened tensions in the district. In response to the incident, police conducted a flag march on Sunday in the district headquarters. Senior officials, including Eastern Range DIG Satyajit Naik, Jajpur Collector P Anvesha Reddy, and Jajpur SP Yash Pratap Shrimal, have called for calm among residents. To prevent further unrest, 28 platoons of police have been deployed strategically throughout the city. —*PTI*

### Accused in 2009 dacoity-murder held after 12 years

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

The Delhi Police Crime Branch has apprehended Mohammad Jamshed Ali Khan, the mastermind behind a notorious dacoity and murder case from 2009, after he evaded capture for over 12 years by masquerading as an occultist. Khan was arrested in his hometown of Badaun, Uttar Pradesh, following a tip-off about his location. He had been on the run since 2012, when he was declared a proclaimed offender.The case dates back to January 6, 2009, when the strangled body of Santosh Yadav, a truck driver, was discovered on NH-24 near Mayur Vihar. Investigations revealed that Khan and his accomplices had murdered Yadav after hitching a ride in his truck and subsequently looted it.

PHOTO: X

### AMU teachers come to blows in meeting

**ALIGARH, 25 NOV**

Two senior faculty members of the Aligarh Muslim University exchanged blows in an official meeting, leading to a possible departmental action, officials said on Monday. Varsity authorities said they had taken cognizance of the matter and were initiating necessary action on the "embarrassing" incident.A video clip that turned up on social media showed Psychology department head Prof Shah Alam and another professor of the same department, Prof SM Khan, trading blows in a meeting on Sunday. Both faculty members complained to the university authority detailing their reasons for the fight, a senior AMU official said.The reason behind the fracas is still unknown, but according to AMU sources, the outburst resulted from a long-standing misunderstanding between the two teachers."This unfortunate and unwarranted incident has come to our knowledge.

### Cheetah Neerva gives birth to cubs in MP's Kuno

**BHOPAL, 25 NOV**

Cheetah Neerva has given birth to cubs at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district, the state forest department said on Monday.The exact number of cubs was not specified by the forest authorities.Last month, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav had shared the information that a female cheetah was pregnant and was expected to deliver cubs soon. Asked about reports on the birth of cubs in Kuno, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) Aseem Shrivastava told PTI that he would not be able to comment until a confirmation from the park about the number of cubs born to the cheetah.Prior to this, 17 cheetah cubs had been born at the KNP.—*PTI*

**IN KATRA**

People protest against a proposed ropeway project along the trek route to the Vaishno Devi shrine, at Katra in Jammu on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

### Protesters, cops clash during anti-ropeway stir

**REASI/JAMMU, 25 NOV**

Protests by shopkeepers and labourers against a proposed ropeway project along the trek route to the Vaishno Devi shrine turned violent on Monday at Katra base camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district. Tensions flared as demonstrators clashed with police, resulting in injuries to one officer during a confrontation with protesters.

Waving banners and chanting slogans, hundreds gathered in Katra for a march and sit-in, demanding the cessation of the Rs 250-crore ropeway initiative, announced by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. The project, intended to connect Tarakote Marg and Sanji Chhat over a 12-kilometre stretch, has sparked fears among local shopkeepers and pony and palanquin operators that it could jeopardise their livelihoods.

The protest, which started on November 22, saw the organisers extending their initial 72-hour strike by an additional 24 hours on Sunday. The situation escalated when a Central Reserve Police Force vehicle attempted to make its way through the crowd, resulting in demonstrators vandalising the vehicle and engaging in clashes with police, including throwing bricks. —*PTI*

### SC bins plea against 'secular' in Preamble

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

In a significant verdict, Supreme Court on Monday dismissed pleas challenging the 1976 amendment to the Constitution adding terms "socialist", "secular" and "integrity" to the Preamble.

The words "socialist", "secular" and "integrity" were inserted into the Preamble to the Constitution under the 42nd constitutional amendment moved by the Indira Gandhi government in 1976.

A bench of Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar had on 22 November reserved its verdict on the pleas filed by former Rajya Sabha MP Subramanian Swamy and advocate Ashwini Updhayay challenging the inclusion of the words "socialist" and "secular" in the Preamble to the Constitution.

One of the first petitions was filed by one Balram Singh through advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain in 2020.

The CJI said the verdict explained that after so many years the process cannot be so nullified.

The date of the adoption of the Constitution would not curtail the government's power under Article 368 and moreover this is not under challenge, the bench noted. The amending power of Parliament extends to Preamble as well, it added.

The top court asked further, "It has almost been so many years, why rake up the issue now?" While reserving the judgement, the bench said the 1976 amendment to the Constitution adding terms "socialist", "secular" and "integrity" to the Preamble had undergone judicial reviews and it cannot be said whatever Parliament did during the emergency period was all nullity. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

### Beant's convict's mercy plea sensitive matter: Govt to SC

The government informed the Supreme Court on Monday that the mercy petition of Balwant Singh Rajoana, convicted for the 1995 murder of then Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, involves significant sensitivities. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta noted that consultations with various agencies were necessary. Rajoana, who has spent over 28 years in prison, is seeking to have his death sentence commuted to life imprisonment, citing delays in the consideration of his mercy petition. —*PTI*

### RG Kar: SC orders SIT probe into custodial torture

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

The Supreme Court on Monday mandated a Special Investigation Team (SIT) inquiry into the alleged torture of a woman in police custody following her arrest during protests against the rape and murder of a doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

A bench comprising Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan modified a previous order from the Calcutta High Court, which had directed a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe. The apex court stated that senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officers from the state would be appointed to lead the investigation instead, emphasising that not all cases should be transferred to the CBI.

The court instructed the SIT, which will include officers proposed by the state, to submit weekly progress reports to the high court. The Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court has been directed to establish a special bench to oversee the SIT's reports and any requests for further investigation. —*PTI*

### Shah's bail plea junked in BMW crash case

**MUMBAI, 25 NOV**

The Bombay High Court has denied bail to Mihir Shah, the primary suspect in a BMW hit-and-run incident, citing the alleged "illegal" nature of his arrest. Shah, 24, the son of a former Shiv Sena leader, and his driver Rajrishi Bidawat had previously filed petitions asserting their unlawful detention and demanding immediate release.

Shah was apprehended on 9 July, following an incident in which he reportedly drove his BMW into a two-wheeler in Worli, Mumbai, resulting in the death of 45-year-old Kaveri Nakhwa and injuries to her husband, Pradeep. Bidawat, who was in the car, was arrested on the day of the incident.

In their petitions, Shah and Bidawat argued that the police had failed to inform them of the reasons for their arrest, contravening legal requirements outlined in Section 50 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which demands clear communication of the grounds for arrest.

A division bench dismissed their requests, stating, "Both the petitions are dismissed." Currently, both men are in judicial custody. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

### ED RAIDS IN DELHI OVER RS 500 CR REAL ESTATE FRAUD

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

The ED on Monday raided a dozen premises in Delhi-NCR as part of a money-laundering investigation against some real estate companies as part of an alleged Rs 500 crore fraud, official sources said.

The searches pertain to companies such as Orris Infrastructure Private Limited, Greenbay Infrastructure Private Limited and Three C Shelter Private Limited and their promoters named Vijay Gupta, Amit Gupta, Sardar Nirmal Singh and some other directors, the sources said.

About a dozen premises in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) are being searched by the Gurugram zonal office of the central agency.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) investigation, being conducted under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, has been initiated after taking cognisance of FIRs filed by the Delhi Police's economic offences wing and the Gurugram Police. These complaints were filed on petitions of some homebuyers who had invested in projects of these companies, the sources said. ED, the sources said, is investigating allegations of real estate fraud, misappropriation and diversion of funds for wrongful gains. —*PTI*

**DECISION SOON ON GRAP**

# *SC asks CAQM to consider restarting classes in Delhi*

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

Supreme Court on Monday asked the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) in the national capital region and adjoining areas to consider restarting physical classes in schools and colleges noting many students lacked mid-day meals and infrastructure to attend online classes.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said a large number of students did not have air purifiers at home and therefore there may not be a difference between children at home and those attending schools.

The top court, however, refused to relax the anti-pollution GRAP-4 restrictions in Delhi-NCR and said unless it was satisfied that there was consistent decrease in AQI levels, it cannot order curbs below GRAP-3 or GRAP-2.

Noting that several sections of society, especially labourers and daily wagers, were adversely affected due to GRAP-4, the bench directed the state governments, where construction has been banned, to use funds collected as labour cess for subsistence to them.

GRAP-4 restrictions specifically relate to restricting entry of trucks carrying non-essential goods into the national capital. —*PTI*

A worker at Kartavya Path amid low visibility due to smog, in New Delhi on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

### Delhi's air quality improves to 'poor'

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

Delhi's air quality has improved to 'poor', with the Air Quality Index (AQI) registering 281 at 9am on Monday, a reduction from 318 the previous afternoon, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). An AQI reading between 201 and 300 signifies 'poor', while 15 of the city's 39 monitoring stations still recorded 'very poor' levels, with Shadipur marking the highest at 353.

In addition to air quality changes, the minimum temperature was noted at 14 degrees Celsius, which is 2.7 degrees above the normal. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted moderate fog in the early morning and evening, with the maximum temperature expected to reach around 28 degrees Celsius. Humidity levels at 8:30 am were at 85 per cent.

**WHALES RESCUED IN NEW ZEALAND**

More than 30 pilot whales that stranded themselves on a beach in New Zealand were safely returned to the ocean after conservation workers and residents helped to refloat them by lifting them on sheets. Four of the pilot whales died
***PHOTO: NZ DEPARTEMENT OF CONSERVATION***

# In 5 months, PM reclaims India's economic glory

An alliance led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP swept elections to India's second-largest state, Maharashtra, on Saturday, dramatically regaining ground it had lost just five months ago in a parliamentary election setback.

Maharashtra, with its capital Mumbai, is India's wealthiest state – its gross domestic product of $510 billion is larger than that of any other state and is also bigger than that of major global economies like Norway and South Africa.

On Saturday, the BJP-led alliance won more than 230 of the 288 seats in the state's legislative assembly, with Modi's party alone triumphing in 132 seats, giving the prime minister complete control over India's economic powerhouse.

The party's win marks a stunning resurgence in a state that has long been politically critical in India, but where, in Lok Sabha (House of the People) elections results in June, the BJP and its allies were trounced by the opposition, said analysts.

The BJP and its partners had won just 17 out of 48 parliamentary seats in Maharashtra, with the opposition, consisting of the Congress party and its allies, winning 30 seats.

Saturday's results left the opposition licking its wounds, even though the Congress-led alliance did win elections to the tribal-dominated state of Jharkhand after the BJP drove a shrill anti-Muslim campaign there. In Maharashtra, the Congress won just 16 seats.

"[The] Congress did not consolidate and frittered away gains of the parliamentary elections," said Sandeep Shastri, a political scientist with the Delhi-based Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). "There is a deep disconnect between the ground and their leadership."

Yet despite the Hindu majoritarian BJP's win in Maharashtra, what worked for it was not necessarily religious polarisation, said analysts. In fact, in Jharkhand, the BJP's anti-Muslim rhetoric might have backfired on it.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi ***PHOTO: PTI***

Where the BJP won Maharashtra was with its shift away from a focus on Modi – whose face has been synonymous with all party campaigns over the past decade – to local factors.

**More women, less Modi**

Maharashtra, a coastal state with more than 125 million people – nearly double the United Kingdom's population – was one of the bleeding wounds for the BJP when it lost the parliamentary majority in June this year.

Five months on, the BJP scored its best-ever performance in the state's election while the Congress – which counted Maharashtra among its strongest bastions for decades – recorded its worst numbers.

Both the national parties forged pre-poll alliances with regional parties. But while the BJP won 132 of the 149 seats it contested – a success rate of 89 percent – the Congress only secured 16 of the 101 seats it contested, a win rate of just 16 percent. The state legislative assembly has a total of 288 seats, with a majority mark of 145.

A survey conducted by CSDS in October revealed that seven in 10 responders had benefitted directly from the scheme. As per the government, the scheme has 23.4 million beneficiaries, in a state with 46 million women voters.

The strategist pointed to another important part of the puzzle behind the BJP win: the support of its ideological fountainhead, the Sangh Parivar, an umbrella term for more than three dozen ultra-Hindu-nationalist groups.

**Where polarisation backfired**

But the BJP lost Jharkhand, a state of 32 million people.

There, too, the ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led government initiated a women-centric cash transfer scheme, providing 1,000 rupees ($12) a month to women aged 18-25 years, reaching nearly 5.2 million women in the run-up to the polls. The state has 12.8 million female voters.

In January this year, national investigative agencies arrested Jharkhand's chief minister Hemant Soren, widely seen as among India's most popular tribal leaders, on corruption charges.

The head of the JMM was released on bail after six months and campaigned before the election. Now, he is poised to return as chief minister, after the alliance he leads – which includes the Congress – won a majority in the state election.

The state's tribal communities – 26 percent of the population – and Muslims – 14.5 percent – backed the JMM-led alliance. The BJP brought Himanta Biswa Sarma, a divisive Hindu nationalist leader from northeastern India, to lead its campaign in Jharkhand. The BJP campaign tried to paint Muslims in the state as "Bangladeshis" and "Rohingya outsiders", including through an Islamophobic advertisement that it had to pull down on the orders of election authorities.

**A decimated Congress**

Meanwhile, the country's principal opposition party, the Congress, appears in disarray after the election results – which come on the back of recent setbacks in two other elections, in Haryana and Indian-administered Kashmir.

The Congress, Verma said, appears to be still struggling to "figure out a strategy for its revival."

Both Verma and Shastri said the Congress had been "piggybacking" on its regional alliance partners to fight the BJP. But with its own numbers dwindling, "the Congress also struggles in its ability to negotiate with regional parties," Verma added.

Two more important states, Delhi and Bihar, are expected to hold their elections in the next few months. But they will now vote in a political atmosphere fundamentally different from what it was earlier this year. *—PTI*

**LETTERS** write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

# 140 women killed daily by kin, partners in 2023: UN

The deadliest place for women is at home and 140 women and girls on average were killed by an intimate partner or family member per day last year, two UN agencies reported Monday.

Globally, an intimate partner or family member was responsible for the deaths of approximately 51,100 women and girls during 2023, an increase from an estimated 48,800 victims in 2022, UN Women and the UN Office of Drugs and Crime said.

The report released on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women said the increase was largely the result of more data being available from countries and not more killings.

But the two agencies stressed that "Women and girls everywhere continue to be affected by this extreme form of gender-based violence and no region is excluded." And they said, "the home is the most dangerous place for women and girls."

The highest number of intimate partner and family killings was in Africa – with an estimated 21,700 victims in 2023, the report said. Africa also had the highest number of victims relative to the size of its population — 2.9 victims per 100,000 people.

The highest number of intimate partner and family killings was in Africa – with an estimated 21,700 victims in 2023 ***PHOTO: UN***

There were also high rates last year in the Americas with 1.6 female victims per 100,000 and in Oceania with 1.5 per 100,000, it said. Rates were significantly lower in Asia at 0.8 victims per 100,000 and Europe at 0.6 per 100,000.

According to the report, the intentional killing of women in the private sphere in Europe and the Americas is largely by intimate partners.

By contrast, the vast majority of male homicides take place outside homes and families, it said.

"Even though men and boys account for the vast majority of homicide victims, women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by lethal violence in the private sphere," the report said.

"An estimated 80 per cent of all homicide victims in 2023 were men while 20 per cent were women, but lethal violence within the family takes a much higher toll on women than men, with almost 60 per cent of all women who were intentionally killed in 2023 being victims of intimate partner/family member homicide," it said.

The report said that despite efforts to prevent the killing of women and girls by countries, their killings "remain at alarmingly high levels."

"They are often the culmination of repeated episodes of gender-based violence, which means they are preventable through timely and effective interventions," the two agencies said. *—PTI*

Report released on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women said increase was largely the result of more data being available from countries and not killings ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

# *Eclectic mix marks Trump 2.0 cabinet, executive branch*

Donald Trump's personnel choices for his new Cabinet and White House reflect his signature positions on immigration and trade but also a range of viewpoints and backgrounds that raise questions about what ideological anchors might guide his Oval Office encore.

With a rapid assembly of his second administration — faster than his effort eight years ago — the former and incoming president has combined television personalities, former Democrats, a wrestling executive and traditional elected Republicans into a mix that makes clear his intentions to impose tariffs on imported goods and crack down on illegal immigration but leaves open a range of possibilities on other policy pursuits.

"The president has his two big priorities and doesn't feel as strongly about anything else — so it's going to be a real jump ball and zigzag," predicted Marc Short, chief of staff to Vice President Mike Pence during Trump's 2017-21 term. "In the first administration, he surrounded himself with more conservative thinkers, and the results showed we were mostly rowing in the same direction. This is more eclectic."

Indeed, Secretary of State-designee Marco Rubio, the Florida senator who has pilloried authoritarian regimes around the world, is in line to serve as top diplomat to a president who praises autocratic leaders like Russia's Vladimir Putin and Hungary's Viktor Orban.

Republican Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer of Oregon has been tapped to sit at the Cabinet table as a pro-union labor secretary alongside multiple billionaires, former governors and others who oppose making it easier for workers to organise themselves.

The prospective treasury secretary, Scott Bessent, wants to cut deficits for a president who promised more tax cuts, better veterans services and no rollbacks of the largest federal outlays: Social Security, Medicare and national defense.

Abortion-rights supporter Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is Trump's choice to lead the Health and Human Services Department, which Trump's conservative Christian base has long targeted as an agency where the anti-abortion movement must wield more influence.

Former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich allowed that members of Trump's slate will not always agree with the president and certainly not with one another. But he minimized the potential for irreconcilable differences:

US President-elect Donald Trump ***PHOTO: PTI***

"A strong Cabinet, by definition, means you're going to have people with different opinions and different skills."

That kind of unpredictability is at the core of Trump's political identity. He is the erstwhile reality TV star who already upended Washington once and is returning to power with sweeping, sometimes contradictory promises that convinced voters, especially those in the working class, that he will do it all again.

There's also plenty of room for conflict, given the breadth of Trump's 2024 campaign promises and his pattern of cycling through Cabinet members and national security personnel during his first term.

This time, Trump has pledged to impose tariffs on foreign goods, end illegal immigration and launch a mass deportation force, goose U.S. energy production and exact retribution on people who opposed — and prosecuted — him. He's added promises to cut taxes, raise wages, end wars in Israel and Ukraine, streamline government, protect Social Security and Medicare, help veterans and squelch cultural progressivism.

Trump alluded to some of those promises in recent weeks as he completed his proposed roster of federal department heads and named top White House staff members. But his announcements skimmed over any policy paradoxes or potential complications.

A hedge-fund billionaire, Bessent built his wealth in world markets. Yet, generally speaking, he's endorsed Trump's tariffs. He rejects the idea that they feed inflation and instead frames tariffs as one-time price adjustments and leverage to achieve US foreign policy and domestic economic aims.

Trump, for his part, declared that Bessent would "help me usher in a new Golden Age for the United States."

Chavez-DeRemer, Trump promised, "will achieve historic cooperation between Business and Labor that will restore the American Dream for Working Families."

When Trump named Kennedy as his pick for health secretary, he did not mention the former Democrat's support for abortion rights. Instead, Trump put the focus on Kennedy's intention to take on the US agriculture, food processing and drug manufacturing sectors.

The vagaries of Trump's foreign policy stand out, as well. Trump's choice for national security adviser, Florida Rep. Mike Waltz, offered mixed messages Sunday when discussing the Russia-Ukraine war, which Trump claims never would have started had he been president, because he would have prevailed on Putin not to invade his neighboring country.

Speaking on "Fox News Sunday," Waltz repeated Trump's concerns over recent escalations, which include President Joe Biden approving sending antipersonnel mines to Ukrainian forces.

Meanwhile, Tulsi Gabbard, Trump's pick for director of national intelligence, the top intelligence post in government, is an outspoken defender of Putin and Syrian President Bashar al Assad, a close ally of Russia and Iran.

Perhaps the biggest wildcards of Trump's governing constellation are budget-and-spending advisers Russell Vought, Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy. Vought led Trump's Office of Management and Budget in his first term and is in line for the same post again. Musk, the world's wealthiest man, and Ramaswamy, a mega-millionaire venture capitalist, are leading an outside advisory panel known as the "Department of Government Efficiency."

The latter effort is a quasi-official exercise to identify waste. It carries no statutory authority, but Trump can route Musk's and Ramaswamy's recommendations to official government pathways, including via Vought. *—PTI*

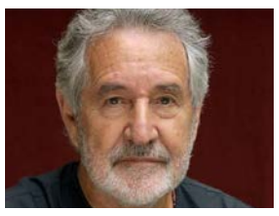


PHOTO: X

## S African writer Breytenbach dies at 85

**JOHANNESBURG, 25 NOV**

South African writer and poet Breyten Breytenbach has died in Paris, his family announced. He is survived by his wife, Yolande, daughter Daphnée and two grandsons. Breytenbach, 85, was a celebrated wordsmith, a leading voice in literature in Afrikaans and a fierce critic of apartheid that was imposed against the country's Black majority between 1948 and 1990. He moved to Paris but on a clandestine trip to his home country in 1975, he was arrested on allegations that he assisted Nelson Mandela's in sabotage campaign against the white-minority government. He was convicted of treason and served seven years in prison. Upon his release he based himself in Paris, where he continued his anti-apartheid activism. *—PTI*

## 1 killed in DHL cargo plane crash in Lithuania

**VILNIUS, 25 NOV**

A DHL cargo plane crashed into a house on Monday morning near the Lithuanian capital, killing at least one person. Lithuanian broadcaster LRT, quoting an emergency official, said two people were taken to the hospital after the crash, and one was later pronounced dead. The LRT said the aircraft crashed into a two-storey house near the airport. The Lithuanian airport authority identified the aircraft as a "DHL cargo plane flying from Leipzig, Germany, to Vilnius." DHL Group did not immediately return a call for comment. Swiftair, a Madrid-based contractor which operated the aircraft, could not be immediately reached. The Boeing 737 was 31 years old, which is considered by experts to be an older airframe, though not unusual for cargo flights. *—PTI*

## UN, pope demand ban on antipersonnel mines

**PHNOM PENH, 25 NOV**

The UN head, Pope Francis and others called Monday for nations to end the production and use of land mines, even as their deployment globally grows. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a message to delegates at the fifth review of the International Mine Ban Treaty, also known as the Ottawa Convention, that 25 years after it went into force some parties had renewed the use of anti-personnel mines and some are falling behind in their commitments to destroy the weapons. "I call on states parties to meet their obligations and ensure compliance to the convention, while addressing humanitarian and developmental impacts through financial and technical support," Guterres said at the opening of the conference in Cambodia. *—PTI*

# Israel–Hezbollah truce in sight: Israeli envoy

### Meanwhile, Iran's supreme leader says Netanyahu should be sentenced to death for war crimes

**JERUSALEM/DUBAI, 25 NOV**

The Israeli ambassador to Washington on Monday sad a ceasefire deal to end fighting between Israel and the Lebanon-based Hezbollah could be reached "within days."

Ambassador Mike Herzog told Israeli Army Radio on Monday that there remained "points to finalize" and that any deal required agreement from the government. But he said "we are close to a deal" and that "it can happen within days."

Among the issues that remain is an Israeli demand to reserve the right to act should Hezbollah violate its obligations under the emerging deal. The deal seeks to push Hezbollah and Israeli troops out of southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah did not adhere to a UN resolution that ended the 2006 war between the sides that made similar provisions, and Israel has concerns that it could stage a Hamas-style cross-border attack from southern Lebanon if it maintained a heavy presence there. Lebanon says Israel also violated the 2006 resolution.

It is not clear whether Lebanon would agree to the demand. The optimism surrounding a deal came after a top US envoy held talks between the two sides last week.

Meanwhile, Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Monday suggested that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should be "sentenced to death" for his role in the ongoing wars in the Gaza Strip and in Lebanon.

Khamenei made the remarks while speaking to members of the Basij, the all-volunteer arm of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, at an event. He referenced the International Criminal Court's decision to issue an arrest warrant for Netanyahu and Israel's former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant.

An Israeli airstrike that killed three journalists and wounded others in Lebanon last month was most likely a deliberate attack on civilians and an apparent war crime, an international human rights group said on Monday.

The 25 October airstrike killed three journalists as they slept at a guesthouse in southeast Lebanon in one of the deadliest attacks on the media since the Israel-Hezbollah war began 13 months ago. *—PTI*

Residents gather in front of a destroyed building that was hit in an Israeli airstrike in Dahiyeh, in Beirut, Lebanon, Monday PHOTO: PTI

WAR WATCH WEST ASIA

## 3 Uzbek nationals held for Israeli rabbi's murder

**DUBAI, 25 NOV**

The United Arab Emirates said Monday police arrested three Uzbek nationals for the killing of an Israeli-Moldovan rabbi.

The statement from the country's Interior Ministry offered no motive for the slaying of **Zvi Kogan**.

Kogan, 28, an ultra-Orthodox rabbi who went missing on Thursday, ran a kosher grocery store in the futuristic city of Dubai, where Israelis have flocked for commerce and tourism since the two countries forged diplomatic ties in the 2020 Abraham Accords.

PHOTO: WHDH.COM

The agreement has held through more than a year of soaring regional tensions unleashed by Hamas' 7 October, 2023 attack into southern Israel. But Israel's devastating retaliatory offensive in Gaza and its invasion of Lebanon, , have stoked anger among Emiratis, Arab nationals and others living in the UAE.

It wasn't immediately clear if the three men had lawyers in the UAE, an autocratically ruled nation of seven sheikhdoms on the Arabian Peninsula. *—PTI*

## PLIGHT CONTINUES

Heavy rain flooded tents for displaced Palestinians across Gaza, bringing more misery to 2.3 million people who have been facing nonstop Israeli bombardment since last October PHOTO: ANADOLU

## Russia nabs British fighter in Kursk

**MOSCOW, 25 NOV**

Russia captured a British national fighting alongside Ukrainian troops in Russia. The man had served as a signalman in the British army for four years and then joined the International Legion of Ukraine. *—PTI*

## Taiwan sights Chinese balloon

**TAIPEI CITY, 25 NOV**

Taiwan's defence ministry said a Chinese balloon was detected over the sea, the first time since April when it flagged such an incident. The balloon was spotted on Sunday about 111km northwest of Keelung City. *—PTI*

# Trump to expel transgenders from military

**WASHINGTON DC, 25 NOV**

US President-elect Donald Trump is reportedly planning an executive order to expel transgender members from the US military, reigniting fears within the LGBTQIA+ community. According to The Sunday Times, the move would medically discharge transgender personnel, deeming them "unfit" to serve.

During his first term, Trump barred transgender individuals from joining the military but allowed those already serving to remain. This time, the reported order would remove the estimated 15,000 transgender individuals currently serving. The executive order could be signed on 20 January, the first day of Trump's second term.

Trump's administration has consistently opposed transgender inclusion. His vision centers on eliminating what he calls "wokeness" and "left-wing indoctrination." He has pledged to cut funding to schools promoting "transgender insanity" or lessons on gender identity, to exclude transgender athletes from girls' sports, and to ban classroom discussions on gender identity.

Donald Trump PHOTO: X@EMEKABRUNO1

Trump's defence pick, Pete Hegseth, echoes similar views, arguing that integrating women and transgender personnel weakens military security, The Washington Post reported.

Additionally, Trump's Vice President-elect JD Vance recently stirred controversy with remarks on transgender and nonbinary individuals. He claimed during a podcast with Joe Rogan that some white children are incentivized to "become" transgender to gain an edge in Ivy League admissions, labeling diversity initiatives as discriminatory against middle-class white families. The report highlights the contrast with President Joe Biden, who lifted Trump's earlier transgender ban. *—Agencies*

# 1 killed as Imran Khan's PTI clash with police

At least 70 policemen were injured in the clashes PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

**LAHORE, 25 NOV**

A policeman was killed and 70 injured when former prime minister Imran Khan's supporters clashed with security personnel deployed to prevent the protesters from reaching Islamabad, the Punjab government said on Monday.

Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari at a press conference here said many policemen were taken "hostage" after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) supporters clashed with the police on the way to Islamabad.

The 72-year-old former premier issued a "final call" on 13 November for nationwide protests on 24 November, denouncing what he termed as the stolen mandate, the unjust arrests of people and the passage of the 26th amendment, which he said has strengthened a "dictatorial regime".

His supporters resumed march towards Islamabad on Monday after an overnight stop on the way amid stiff resistance by the authorities to foil their attempt to enter the national capital and stage a sit-in at the D-Chowk, located close to several important government buildings: the Presidency, the PM Office, the Parliament, and the Supreme Court. At least 70 policemen have been injured and one killed in clashes, she said.

Bokhari said the condition of five personnel was critical.

Bokhari said Khan's wife Bushra Bibi was setting this country on fire. "Bushra is inciting the Pashtuns (Pathans) to get her husband released." Khan has been implicated in dozens of cases since his government was dismissed through a no-confidence motion in 2022. He has been in Adiala Jail at Rawalpindi since last year facing over 200 cases. Bokhari said Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz instructed police officers to remain unarmed. However, the PTI came armed from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to wreak havoc and instigate violence, she said. *—PTI*

# 16 killed in Indonesia landslides

**KARO, 25 NOV**

Rescuers in Indonesia recovered 16 bodies from tons of mud and rocks or those were swept away in flash floods that hit mountainside villages on Sumatra Island, while six people were still missing, officials said Monday.

Rivers burst banks in torrential rains over the weekend, tearing through four hilly districts in North Sumatra province, washing away houses and destroying farms.

Police, soldiers and rescue workers used excavators, farm equipment and their bare hands to sift through the rubble, looking for the dead and missing in Semangat Gunung, a resort area in Karo district, said Juspri M Nadeak, who heads the local disaster management agency. Rescuers also pulled out two bodies from a river after flash floods swept away at least 10 houses and damaged about 150 houses and buildings in villages in South Tapanuli district, said Puput Mashuri, who heads the local disaster management agency. Flash floods left four people dead in Deli Serdang district and rescue workers on Monday were searching for two people who were still missing. *—PTI*

Rescuers carry the body of a victim of the landslide in Karo, North Sumatra, Indonesia PHOTO: PTI

## England, Wales battle floods after weekend storm

**LONDON, 25 NOV**

Hundreds of homeowners in England and Wales were battling floodwaters Monday morning after the second major storm of the winter brought widespread disruption to the UK.

Several rail operators cancelled services as more than 180 flood warnings remained in place after Storm Bert lashed the country with heavy rains and wind gusts up to 80 mph over the weekend. As much as 130 millimetres (5.1 inches) of rain fell in some areas, causing some rivers to overflow their banks and turning roads into waterways.

A severe flood warning, was issued early Monday for areas near the River Nene in Northampton.

Among the hardest hit areas were parts of Wales, where residents of Pontypridd tried to protect their homes by using buckets to bail water over a flood wall and back into the River Taff. Two severe flood warnings issued for the River Monnow in southeast Wales have been lowered to warnings. *—PTI*

## PHILIPPINE PREZ TO FIGHT VP'S PLOT TO HAVE HIM KILLED

**MANILA, 25 NOV**

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. on Monday described a public threat by the vice president to have him killed by an assassin as a criminal plot and vowed to fight. Vice President Sara Duterte said Saturday in an online news conference that she has contracted an assassin to kill the president, his wife and the speaker of the House of Representatives if she herself is killed, in a threat she warned was not a joke.

The police and military immediately boosted the security of the president, and the justice department said it would summon the vice president for probe. *—PTI*

## Calin takes shock lead in Romania's prez election

**25 NOV, BUCHAREST**

Romania's politics were upended as ultranationalist Calin Georgescu secured 22.9 per cent of the vote in the presidential election's first round, advancing to a runoff against reformist Elena Lasconi (19.17 per cent) of the Save Romania Union (USR). The result defied polls predicting a win for outgoing Prime Minister, who came third. Georgescu, known for opposing NATO, ran a populist campaign addressing Romania's cost-of-living crisis and opposing aid to Ukraine. Critics highlighted his ties to far-right ideologies and controversial views on Romania's history and foreign policy. It signals a surge in far-right support, with about one-third of voters backing nationalist candidates. *—Agencies*

## Leftist Oppn candidate Orsi is Uruguay's new Prez

**MONTEVIDEO, 25 NOV**

Uruguay's leftist opposition candidate, Yamandu Orsi, became the country's new president in a tight runoff Sunday, ousting the conservative governing coalition and making the South American nation the latest to rebuke the incumbent party in a year of landmark elections worldwide.

Even as the vote count continued, Alvaro Delgado, the presidential candidate for the center-right ruling coalition, conceded defeat to his challenger while surrounded by sullen-looking family members and colleagues.

"The country of liberty, equality and fraternity has triumphed once again," Orsi said to sprawling crowds of supporters that waved flags and shouted their support. "I will be the president who calls for national dialogue again and again, who builds a more integrated society and country."

A political heir to former President Jose "Pepe" Mujica, an ex-Marxist guerilla who became a global icon for transforming Uruguay into one of the most liberal and environmentally sustainable nations in the region, Orsi rode to power on promises of safe change and nostalgia for his left-wing party's redistributive social policies. *—PTI*

Yamandu Orsi PHOTO: PTI

UNICEF REPORT

# *Kids recruited by Haiti gangs soars by 70%*

**SAN JUAN, 25 NOV**

Gangs in Haiti are recruiting children at unprecedented levels, with the number of minors targeted soaring by 70 per cent in the past year, says a UNICEF report released on Monday.

Currently, between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of all gang members in the violence-torn country are children, according to the UN. "This is a very concerning trend," said Geeta Narayan, UNICEF's representative in Haiti.

The increase comes as poverty deepens and violence increases amid political instability, with gangs that control 85 per cent of Port-au-Prince attacking once peaceful communities in a push to assume total control of the capital.

Young boys are often used as informers "because they're invisible and not seen as a threat," Narayan said in a phone interview from Haiti. Some are given weapons and forced to participate in attacks.

Girls are forced to cook, clean and even used as so-called "wives" for gang members. "They're not doing this voluntarily," Narayan said. "Even when they are armed with weapons, the child here is the victim."

In a country where more than 60 per cent of the population lives on less than USD 4 a day and hundreds of thousands of Haitians are starving or nearing starvation, recruiting children is often easy.

One minor who was in a gang said he was paid USD 33 every Saturday, while another said he was paid thousands of dollars in his first month in a gang operation, says a UN Security Council report.

"Children and families are becoming increasingly desperate in some cases because of the extreme poverty," Narayan said. *—PTI*

The increase comes as poverty deepens and violence increases amid political instability PHOTO: X@OUTREMERS360

## Gold tumbles ₹1,000; silver plunges ₹1,600

MUMBAI, 25 NOV

Gold prices tumbled Rs 1,000 to slip below the Rs 80,000 level in the national capital on Monday amid weak global trends, according to local marketmen. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity tanked Rs 1,000 to Rs 79,400 per 10 grams against the previous close of Rs 80,400 on Friday. Silver declined Rs 1,600 to Rs 91,700 per kg. The metal finished at Rs 93,300 per kg on Friday. The price of gold with 99.5 per cent purity plunged Rs 1,000 to Rs 79,000 per 10 grams. The yellow metal had settled at Rs 80,000 per 10 grams in the previous session on Friday. In the Asian market hours, silver also quoted 1.7 per cent lower at USD 31.24 per ounce. Last week, the yellow metal went beyond USD 2,700 mark due to the worsening conflict between Russia and Ukraine. —*PTI*

## Rupee rises 10P to close at 84.31 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 25 NOV

The rupee appreciated 10 paise to close at 84.31 (provisional) against US dollar on Monday, supported by a firm trend in domestic equities amid improved investor risk appetite. Forex traders said investor sentiment got a boost after the Israeli ambassador to Washington said the Hezbollah ceasefire deal could come "within days". At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.38 and touched an intra-day high of 84.25 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 84.31 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a rise of 10 paise over its previous close. On Friday, the rupee recovered from its all-time low level and appreciated 9 paise to close at 84.41 against the US dollar. Meanwhile, the dollar index, was trading lower by 0.47 per cent. —*PTI*

## 850 IRS officers opted VRS in 10 years: MoS Finance

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

A total of 853 Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officers have taken VRS in the last 10 years, Parliament was informed on Monday. Of this, 383 IRS (Income Tax) officers and 470 IRS (Customs & Indirect Taxes) officers have taken retirement under VRS during 2014-2024, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. In a separate reply, he said 2,746.49 kg of gold has been seized at airports in Kerala by Customs department and DRI during FY20 to FY25 (up to 31 October, 2024). As per RBI data on financial frauds in respect of amount over Rs 1 lakh and based on the date of occurrence, amounts involved in fraud cases in commercial banks and all India financial institutions have declined from Rs 9,298 crore in 2021-22 to Rs 3,607 crore in 2022-23. —*PTI*

## UPL, CH4 global launch methane reducing cattle feed

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

Agricultural solutions provider UPL and CH4 Global announced a strategic partnership on Thursday to distribute a seaweed-based feed supplement in five major markets, including India that could reduce cattle methane emissions by up to 90 per cent. The multi-year agreement targets India, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, which together account for more than 40 per cent of the global cattle population, the UPL said in a regulatory filing. The partnership will focus on distributing CH4 Global's Methane Tamer product, a feed supplement derived from Asparagopsis seaweed, through UPL's existing distribution networks and feed formulations. The partnership aims to create specific business models for each target market, integrating Methane Tamer into UPL's existing feed products while leveraging the company's market presence and customer relationships. —*PTI*

# Adani asserts growth without external borrowing

### Adani's long-term debt from domestic banks is ₹94,400 crore

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

Billionaire Gautam Adani's conglomerate on Monday showcased its cash reserves and profits that are enough to service debt obligations as well as meet growth plans as it reassured investors about business as usual despite a US bribery indictment against the founder.

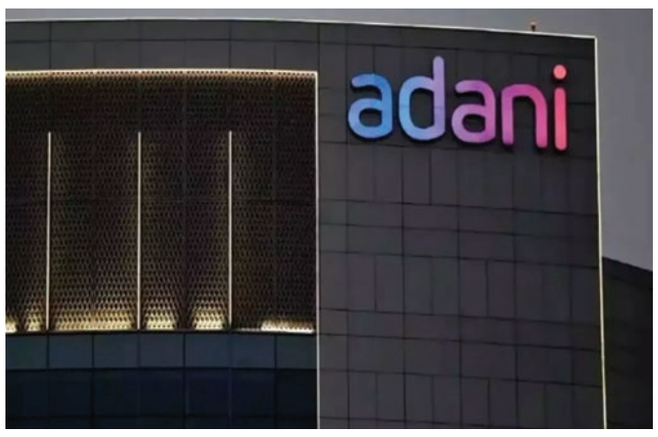
Equity now accounts for almost two-thirds of its total asset creation, a stark contrast to five years ago. In the past six months, the group invested close to Rs 75,227 crore against a total debt increase of only Rs 16,882 crore.

Outlining the group's liquidity position, the note said, "Adani portfolio companies have sufficient liquidity to cover all debt servicing requirements for at least 12 months. As of September 30, 2024, Adani portfolio companies had cash of Rs 53,024 crore, which was close to 21 per cent of its total gross debt outstanding."

In the past, the group had announced plans to invest more than Rs 8 lakh crore (USD 100 billion) across portfolio companies in the next 10 years.

Fund Flows from Operations (FFO) or cash profits stood at Rs 58,908 crore for the past 12 months and grew at over 30 per cent during the last five years. Existing annual cash flows alone can pay the entire debt in three years.

Gross assets or investments increased by Rs 75,227 crore against a total debt increase of only Rs 16,882 crore. The asset base has now increased to Rs 5.5 lakh crore.




Adani invested close to Rs 75,227 crore against a total debt increase of only Rs 16,882 crore PHOTO: X

Average cost of borrowing is at 8.2 per cent, the lowest in five years, due to upgrades in ratings across group companies, it said.

The Adani Group's long-term debt from domestic banks is Rs 94,400 crore.

The Adani group presentation to investors came as doubts were being expressed over its ability to raise funds overseas following the US indictment against its founder chairman Gautam Adani and seven others including his nephew Sagar, for being part of an alleged USD 265 million bribery scheme.

Some global banks and financial institutions were reportedly considering temporarily halting fresh credit to the group.

Last week, S&P Ratings had said it will watch for any signs of weaker funding access or concerns from existing lenders -- which could be demonstrated by the lowering of funding limits, non-renewal of facilities, or significantly higher credit spreads.

After the news of the indictment broke, equity and bond prices across Adani group companies have fallen.

The group cancelled a USD 600 million concluded bond sale.

This indictment is independent of, but follows, a short-seller report last year, which hit equity and bond prices across the group although these had subsequently recovered.

The group, which had denied all allegations levelled by US short-seller Hindenburg Research, has also dismissed the allegations in the US indictment as baseless and has said it would seek all possible legal recourse. —*PTI*

## ADANI ENERGY SURGES 7%, 9 OTHERS CLIMB

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

Shares of nine of the ten Adani group firms climbed on the bourses in morning trade on Monday, with Adani Energy Solutions surging nearly 7 per cent, in-tandem with a rally in the equity market.

The stock of Adani Energy Solutions jumped 6.89 per cent, Adani Green Energy soared 6.42 per cent, Adani Total Gas surged 5.33 per cent, Adani Ports climbed 4.64 per cent and Adani Power rallied 4.17 per cent on the BSE.

Shares of Adani Enterprises went up by 4 per cent, Adani Wilmar (3.23 per cent), ACC (3 per cent) and Ambuja Cements (2.71 per cent) on the BSE.

However, NDTV shares went lower by 2 per cent.

The BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 1,330.17 points to 80,447.28 in morning trade and the NSE Nifty surged 438 points to 24,345.25. —PTI

## INVESTORS RICH BY ₹14.20L CR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Devendra Fadnavis PHOTO: PTI

# Sensex reclaims 80K mark; Nifty surges over 1%

MUMBAI, 25 NOV

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty surged more than 1 per cent on Monday, helped by a rally in blue-chip stocks and the BJP pulling off a stunning performance in Maharashtra, winning a record number of seats to propel the party-led ruling Mahayuti alliance to a landslide victory.

Investors' wealth soared Rs 14.20 lakh crore in two days of spectacular rally in the equity market where the BSE benchmark Sensex jumped nearly 4 per cent during this time.

Extending its previous day's sharp rally, the BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 992.74 points or 1.25 per cent to settle at 80,109.85. During the day, it soared 1,355.97 points or 1.71 per cent to 80,473.08.

The NSE Nifty surged 314.65 points or 1.32 per cent to 24,221.90.

From the 30-share Sensex pack, Larsen & Toubro, State Bank of India, Adani Ports, Reliance Industries, Power Grid, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Axis Bank were the biggest gainers.

On the other hand, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Maruti, Asian Paints and HCL Tech were the laggards.

Online food delivery giant Zomato will become a part of the benchmark BSE Sensex, replacing JSW Steel from December 23.

This is part of the latest reconstitution announced by Asia Index Private Ltd, a subsidiary of BSE.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,278.37 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. —*PTI*

## AMID HIGH INTEREST RATES

# S&P lowers India's FY26-27 GDP forecast

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

S&P Global Ratings on Monday revised down its estimate for India's economic growth in the next two financial years as high interest rate and lower fiscal impulse temper urban demand.

In an update to its economic forecast for Asia-Pacific economies after US election results, the rating agency projected a 6.7 per cent GDP growth rate in 2025-26 financial year (April 2025 to March 2026) and 6.8 per cent in the following fiscal year, down from 6.9 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively in previous projections.

For FY25, S&P Global pegged GDP growth rate at 6.8 per cent.

The agency expects India's GDP to grow at 7 per cent in FY28.

S&P retained its growth projection for China at 4.8 per cent in 2024 but cut next year's forecast to 4.1 per cent from 4.3 per cent earlier and to 3.8 per cent in 2026 from the previous estimate of 4.5 per cent.

The Asia-Pacific growth will be impeded by slower global demand. —*PTI*

# CNG price hiked by ₹2 in Mumbai, other cities; Delhi spared

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

CNG price in Mumbai as well as several other cities in the country has been hiked by Rs 2 per kg but users in poll-bound Delhi have been spared for the time being, according to city gas firms.

Indraprastha Gas Ltd, the firm that retails CNG to automobiles and pipes natural gas to household kitchens for cooking in the national capital and adjoining cities, over the weekend raised CNG price by Rs 2 per kg.

Prices were hiked in Noida, Greater Noida, Ghaziabad, Gurugram and other cities but Delhi, which goes to polls in a few weeks from now, was spared.

With elections out of the way, Mahanagar Gas Ltd (MGL) - the city gas retailer in Mumbai, hiked CNG prices in Mumbai and adjoining areas by Rs 2 per kg, according to MGL website.

CNG rates differ from state to state depending upon the incidence of local taxes PHOTO: X

While CNG rates in Delhi remain unchanged at Rs 75.09 per kg, prices have gone up by Rs 2 per kg to Rs 81.70 in Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad, and to Rs 82.12 per kg in Gurugram with effect from November 23, according to IGL website.

When Uttar Pradesh was going to polls in 2022, IGL had revised prices in Delhi but kept rates unchanged for cities in the state.

CNG rates differ from state to state depending upon the incidence of local taxes. —*PTI*

## India refuses to pause Apple's anti-trust case

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

India's competition regulator, the Competition Commission of India (CCI), has denied Apple's plea to halt the release of an investigative report into its app store practices

The investigation, initiated after complaints alleging anti-competitive practices, scrutinizes Apple's conduct in restricting app developers and charging high commissions on in-app purchases. Apple had requested a pause, arguing for a review of the process, but the CCI ruled against the delay, stating report's release is crucial progress. —*Agencies*

# Coal India seeks e-auction bids

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

Despite having switched to its internal e-auction platform in January this year, Coal India Ltd (CIL) has floated a tender seeking bids from private service providers to conduct e-auctions of the dry fuel for its subsidiaries over the next two years, officials said on Monday.

This move has left external e-auction service providers, such as MSTC and mjunction, who have managed CIL's auctions through electronic platforms for nearly two decades, confused and they were seeking more clarity before deciding whether to participate in the tender, stakeholders said.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

The deadline for submission of bids is November 27.

CIL had engaged its subsidiary CMPDI to develop an internal coal e-auction system in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), the officials said.

The internal platform was successfully transitioned in January 2024 after conducting successful trials in 2023.

CIL's coal volume through the e-auction platform was estimated to reach around 60 million tonnes by September 2024.

The new engagement with external service providers is expected to begin in April next year after the current contracts with service providers expire in March, he said. —*PTI*

## LIFT BAN ON COMMODITY FUTURES: SEA

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

Edible oil industry SEA on Monday called on the government to lift a ban on futures trading in key agricultural commodities, including crude palm oil and soyabean, citing significant financial impact on its members.

The ban, first implemented in December 2021 on seven agricultural commodities, has been extended multiple times. —*PTI*

# '12-15 % of IT professionals prefer temporary roles'

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

In a notable shift within the IT industry, 12-15 per cent of IT professionals now favour temporary job roles over permanent positions, according to a Careernet report.

This trend is gaining traction as professionals increasingly see temporary roles as gateways to reputable organisations and opportunities to diversify their experience while enhancing skills.

The study highlights that cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai, Gurugram, and Mumbai have the highest concentration of temporary IT professionals.

A growing preference among organisations for temporary hires is particularly for project-based, short-term, and non-core roles in areas such as IT infrastructure administration, ERP skills, and software development.

Among industries, IT Services leads in adopting the temporary hiring model, followed by consulting and BFSI sectors. —*ANI*

## IN AGRICULTURE

# *46% workforce drives just 18% of India's GDP*

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

India faces a significant challenge, with 46 per cent of its workforce engaged in agriculture, contributing only 18 per cent to the GDP, according to the foundation for economic development report.

Manufacturing stands out as the only sector capable of absorbing unskilled labour at a scale necessary to drive the economy forward.

Jobs in manufacturing and services are 3-6 times more productive than agricultural work, underscoring the sector's potential to transition the workforce into higher productivity roles.

Industrial clusters, which act as hubs for manufacturing jobs, require more labour than surrounding towns and villages can supply.

However, the lack of adequate worker housing near these clusters has emerged as a key barrier, leading to labour shortages and lower productivity. This shortfall also hampers India's ability to compete globally in manufacturing exports, limiting job creation and economic growth.

Jobs in manufacturing and services are 3-6 times more productive than agricultural work PHOTO: X

- To address these challenges, the report recommends a series of reforms to unlock manufacturing potential

The report highlights that existing worker housing is often informal, consisting of unauthorised slums or substandard settlements that fail to meet the scale and quality needed.

To address these challenges, the report recommends a series of reforms to unlock manufacturing potential.

It proposes government financial support in the form of subsidies for constructing worker housing and rental vouchers for workers. —*ANI*

# Amazon workers to strike on Black Friday in 20 nations

NEW DELHI, 25 NOV

PHOTO: PTI

Thousands of Amazon workers in over 20 countries plan to strike during Black Friday and Cyber Monday, demanding better rights, fair wages, and climate responsibility from the retail giant. Protests, led by the Make Amazon Pay campaign, will take place in major cities across the US, UK, Germany, Canada, and beyond.

The movement, spearheaded by UNI Global Union and Progressive International, unites over 80 trade unions and activist groups.

Protesters are calling for fair pay, union recognition, tax transparency, and environmental commitments from Amazon.

In the UK, actions include a march in London to 11 Downing Street, demanding an end to corporate tax breaks. Strikes are also planned at Amazon warehouses in Germany, France, and other nations.

Last year, hundreds protested at the Coventry warehouse in a global campaign for improved working conditions.

Activists argue Amazon prioritizes profit over worker welfare, with growing emissions and resistance to unionization cited as key issues. While Amazon claims to offer competitive pay and renewable energy initiatives, critics point out its rising carbon emissions and lack of interim net-zero targets. —*Agencies*

## Mirabai, Yogeshwar join Constitution Day march

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

Olympic medallists Mirabai Chanu, Ravi Dahiya and Yogeshwar Dutt, along with over 10,000 MY Bharat youth volunteers participated in the historic 'Humara Samvidhan Humara Swabhiman Padyatra' on the eve of the 75th Constitution Day, on Monday. Led by sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya, the 6-km foot march aimed at promoting constitutional values and engaging the youth in India's democratic heritage. The march, which commenced at the Major Dhyan Chand Stadium, passed through Kartavya Path and culminated at India Gate, highlighted the importance of the Constitution's core principles of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. Additionally, the event included an 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative too. *—PTI*

PHOTO:X

## Lukaku strikes, Napoli reclaims Serie A lead

**ROME, 25 NOV**

Romelu Lukaku scored against his former club and Napoli beat struggling Roma 1-0 to reclaim the Serie A lead and spoil Claudio Ranieri's debut with the Giallorossi. Napoli moved one point ahead of Atalanta, Inter Milan, Fiorentina and Lazio. Fiorentina won 2-0 at Como for its seventh consecutive victory and Lazio beat 10-man Bologna 3-0. Lukaku redirected in a cross from Napoli captain Giovanni Di Lorenzo early in the second half at the Stadio Diego Armando Maradona. Roma had a chance to equalize but Artem Dovbyk's header banged off the crossbar. Lukaku played for Roma last season but was one of the main transfer targets when Antonio Conte was hired at Napoli for this season. *—PTI*

## EuroBasket: After kidney loss, Serbian player drives to win

**MIAMI, 25 NOV**

The Serbian national team player who lost a kidney at last year's Basketball World Cup is back on the floor with the club, and helped it clinch a spot in next year's EuroBasket tournament. Borisa Simanic — playing a home game in Belgrade with the national team for the first time since getting hurt in the Philippines last year — scored 12 points on Sunday in Serbia's 98-51 win over Denmark. The win made Serbia the sixth team to secure a spot in the European championships, along with Lithuania and four host nations — Latvia, Finland, Cyprus and Poland. There are 18 spots remaining in the 24-team field. Simanic lost a kidney as the result of an injury suffered in a game Serbia played against South Sudan. *—PTI*

## Hockey star Ashok suffers heart attack; to undergo surgery

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

Former India hockey player and son of legendary Major Dhyan Chand, Ashok Kumar suffered a heart attack after being hospitalised here for discomfort in chest but is now stable and out of danger, sources in his family said on Monday. The 74-year-old will undergo an angioplasty later on Monday. "He (Ashok Kumar) felt discomfort in chest yesterday (Sunday) evening. He was then taken to Escorts Hospital where angiography was performed. The angiography results showed there were a few blockages. The doctors will implant stents today," family sources told PTI. "He is out of danger and in a stable condition." He became a recipient of the Arjuna Award in 1974 and, in 1975, scored the winning goal against Pakistan to achieve India's only win in the World Cup. *—PTI*

# BUMRAH WALKS THE TALK DURING ALL 4 DAYS

### He allows others to bowl from Member's End for extra help

**PERTH, 25 NOV**

Not many teams have come back after being 150 all-out on the first day of the opening Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy here but this Indian team has time and again showed that it is built different. Prior to the Test, Bumrah spoke about embracing challenges and he did walk the talk during all four days.

It was evident from the manner in which he allowed Mohammed Siraj (match haul of five wickets), debutants Harshit Rana (match haul of four wickets) and Nitish Reddy (41 and 37 not out and one wicket) bowl from the Member's End so that they can get extra help due to the ball keeping low.

Washington Sundar (two wickets and 29 runs), who was preferred after the team management felt that Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja with 850 plus Test wickets between them, would not be as effective on this track, also did his bit in mopping up the tail.

The victory will bear greater significance because of India's shocking 0-3 whitewash at home by New Zealand.

With three of their automatic first team selections in skipper Rohit, talented Shubman Gill and bowling artist Mohammed Shami ruled out due to different reasons, Bumrah, leading in only his second Test, was left with a lot to do and less options to work with.

India's captain Jasprit Bumrah, center, celebrates with teammate Dhruv Jurel on the fourth day of the first cricket Test **PHOTO: PTI**

> **That was Jaiswal's best Test innings so far. He left the ball well. He likes to attack but he left a lot of balls**
>
> -Jasprit Bumrah, Stand-in skipper

Gabba 2021 evokes nostalgia for every Indian cricket fan but Perth 2024 will certainly be right up there considering that no one, save those eleven and the few others in that change room, could have believed that something like this is possible.

Credit must also go to head coach Gautam Gambhir, who copped a lot of flak after the defeat to the Black Caps and it was widely believed that rookies Reddy and Harshit got Test caps on his insistence. *—PTI*

### Rohit faces 'Pink Ball', preps for Canberra game

India captain Rohit Sharma was quick to hit the nets following his arrival here after a paternity break to join the team that was brilliantly led to a record 295-run victory over Australia by his deputy Jasprit Bumrah in the opening Test on Monday. Rohit, who welcomed a son some days ago, arrived in Perth on Sunday evening and was in dressing room to witness India's biggest Test win on Australian soil. Bumrah, who picked up the player of the match with a haul of eight wickets, welcomed the skipper's arrival in post-match conference.

**WORLD C'SHIP OPENER**

Grandmaster D Gukesh **PHOTO: PTI**

# Liren draws first blood against Gukesh

**SINGAPORE, 25 NOV**

Grandmaster D Gukesh paid dearly for unwarranted complications in his middle game as defending champion Ding Liren of China drew first blood by defeating the teenaged Indian in a high-pressure opening game of the World Chess Championship here on Monday.

The victory with black pieces gave the Chinese an early lead in the 14-game showdown scheduled to last till mid-December.

"It can happen; it's a long match. About my opponent's form, I expected nothing else. I expected the best version of him, and we have a long match ahead, so it's only more exciting now," Gukesh said after the game.

Winning with black not just meant a full point but also huge psychological advantage for Liren in the USD 2.5 million prize money event because he entered the competition with patchy form. The first player to reach 7.5 points among the two will claim the coveted crown.

Gukesh, the youngest ever challenger for the world championship crown, came up with an early surprise in the opening by pushing his king pawn forward. It's a move that symbolises attacking intentions and the Chinese chose the French defense.

The line chosen by Gukesh was exactly what the legendary Viswanathan Anand picked in his first world championship-winning contest against Alexei Shirov. *—PTI*

Kerala Blasters celebrate their win against Chennaiyin FC **PHOTO: X**

# Stahre hails Blasters' 3-0 victory over Chennaiyin

**KOCHI, 25 NOV**

Kerala Blasters head coach Mikael Stahre offered high praise for his team's dominant 3-0 victory over Chennaiyin FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) in Kochi.

Following a slow first half, Jesus Jimenez opened the scoring for the Blasters in the 56th minute. Noah Sadaoui added another goal in the 70th minute, and Rahul Kannoly Praveen's stoppage-time strike in the 92nd minute sealed the comprehensive win on Sunday.

Reflecting on the game in the post-match press conference, he said, "Firstly, congrats to all of us. I think it was a great win. I think we controlled the game. They had some big chances when we made individual mistakes, I don't know, in the first 15-20 minutes of the game. But in general, we defended well and also had great chances all the time. So I think we deserved this victory," as quoted by ISL.

Stahre was equally complimentary of the players' energy and the electric atmosphere created by the supporters.

Mumbai City FC eye third straight win against Punjab FC

Mumbai City FC will face Punjab FC as the Islanders aim to go above the visitors in this crucial fixture of the Indian Super League here on Tuesday. *—PTI*

# Sindhu, Lakshya eye titles at Syed Modi International

**LUCKNOW, 25 NOV**

PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen will aim to end their title droughts when they spearhead India's challenge at the Syed Modi International Super 300 badminton tournament starting on Tuesday.

Fresh off a semifinal finish in their comeback tournament post the Paris Olympics, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, the former world No. 1 doubles pair, enter as favourites in the men's doubles category.

Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medallist, last clinched a title at the Singapore Open in 2022, while Lakshya, a 2021 World Championships bronze-medallist, won the Canada Open in 2023.

The 29-year-old Sindhu reached the final of the Malaysia Masters earlier this year but has struggled to find her peak form.

Lakshya, 23, showed promise with semifinal finishes at the All England Championship, French Open, and Paris Olympics, where he lost the bronze playoff from a strong position to Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia.

Both shuttlers have endured mixed fortunes since their Olympic outings.

Sindhu, meanwhile, has battled inconsistency, with a shock first-round loss to Canada's Michelle Li in Finland and subsequent defeats at the Denmark Open and Kumamoto Masters.

The clash between the seasoned Sindhu and the prodigious Kharb promises to be an intriguing one, symbolising the generational shift in Indian badminton.

In men's singles, second seed Priyanshu Rajawat is a strong contender alongside Lakshya.

Other Indian hopefuls include third seed Kiran George, 2023 World Junior Championships bronze-medallist Ayush Shetty, Sathish Karunakaran, and Chirag. *—PTI*

Sinner **PHOTO: X**

## SINNER POWERS ITALY TO DAVIS CUP VICTORY

**MALAGA, 25 NOV**

Italy went nearly a quarter-century without winning the Davis Cup. Then along came Jannik Sinner, and now the country is celebrating its second consecutive title.

The No. 1-ranked Sinner clinched the championship in the annual team event and capped his breakthrough season by beating Tallon Griekspoor 7-6 (2), 6-2 on Sunday for a 2-0 win over the Netherlands in the final of the Davis Cup.

Matteo Berrettini put Italy ahead with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Botic van de Zandschulp — the last man to beat Rafael Nadal — in the opening singles match on an indoor hard court at the Palacio de Deportes Jose Maria Martin Carpena in southern Spain.

The Italians, backed by a loud contingent of singing fans playing drums and armed with megaphones in the crowd of 9,200, became the first team to win the Davis Cup twice in a row since the Czech Republic in 2012 and 2013.After Sinner finished off his win, Berrettini and other teammates rushed onto the court to begin the party, wrapping their arms around one another and bouncing in unison. Volandri grabbed Sinner and lifted him off the ground.

The Netherlands reached the Davis Cup final for the first time.

Until last year, Italy's only Davis Cup triumph came in 1976. So Volandri said he told his players to think of their goal this way: "We want to make history." *—PTI*

**IPL BID CONTINUES**

## Akash Ambani happy to team Bumrah with Boult for MI

**JEDDAH, 25 NOV**

Mumbai Indians owner Akash Ambani on Monday expressed his delight after succeeding in his plans to pair the peerless Jasprit Bumrah with New Zealand pace great Trent Boult for the 2025 IPL.

MI have zeroed in on their playing 12 which includes the bowling partnership of Boult with Bumrah, said Ambani during the second day of the IPL mega auction here.

Flamboyant Indian opener Prithvi Shaw and seam-bowling all-rounder Shardul Thakur failed to find any takers but Washington Sundar was bought by Gujarat Titans for Rs 3.20 crore on the second day of the IPL mega auction here on Monday.

Out of national reckoning for more than two years, Bhuvneshwar Kumar's experience was in demand among the IPL franchises with Royal Challengers Bengaluru buying him for Rs 10.75 crore, while the 13-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi bagged a Rs 1.10 crore contract with Rajasthan Royals. South African veteran Faf du Plessis and West Indies' Rovman Powell were bought for Rs two crore and Rs 1.50 crore by Delhi Capitals and Kolkata Knight Riders respectively, but seasoned India batter Ajinkya Rahane went unsold.

Punjab Kings continued their shopping spree as they spent Rs seven crore for South African pacer Marco Jansen, while Krunal Pandya (Rs 5.75 crore) and Nitish Rana (Rs 4.20 crore) also fetched decent deals. *—PTI*

**AUS'S MOST DECORATED**

# *14-time Olympic medalist Emma retires from swimming*

**SYDNEY, 25 NOV**

Emma McKeon, Australia's most decorated Olympian, announced her retirement from competitive swimming on Monday.

McKeon holds the Australian record of 14 Olympic medals — six of them gold — won over three Summer Olympics, while her seven-medal haul at Tokyo 2020 is the most ever by a female swimmer at a single Games and equal most for any female athlete from any sport at a single Olympics.

The 30-year-old McKeon had previously hinted that the 2024 Paris Games — where she won gold in the 4 x 100m freestyle relay — would be her final Olympics, but she had not said whether she would continue to swim competitively.

"I am proud of myself for giving my swimming career absolutely everything, both physically and mentally. I wanted to see what I was capable of, and I did," McKeon said on social media.

"Swimming has given me so much. From the dream igniting at 5 years old, right through to my third Olympic games - I have so many lessons, experiences, friendships and memories that I am so thankful for."

McKeon's 14 medals came across the Rio 2016, Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Games, with six Olympic gold, three silver and five bronze.

She's second only to Katie Ledecky in terms of Olympic swimming gold medals won. The American has won nine across four Olympics in her tally of 14.

"Emma has added her own incredible chapter to Australia's history at the Olympic Games," Australian Olympic Committee President Ian Chesterman said in a written statement. *—PTI*

Emma McKeon **PHOTO: X**

## Lasha urges more judo competitions in India

**CHENNAI, 25 NOV**

Legendary Georgian judoka and Olympic gold medalist Lasha Shavdatuashvili believes the lack of a strong judo ecosystem in India is hindering the sport's growth as he urged the need for increased exposure.

India have achieved notable milestones, including a bronze medal by Poonam Chopra way back at the 1994 Asian Games in Hiroshima, as well as four podium finishes at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games with Sushila Likmabam and Navjot Chana each winning a silver.

At the Olympics, Indian judokas have consistently qualified since London 2012, yet progress has remained limited. *—PTI*

## World Athletics boss Coe in India, meets sports minister

**NEW DELHI, 25 NOV**

Sebastian Coe **PHOTO: PTI**

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe is in the national capital for "informal" meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

The 68-year-old former middle distance runner, who won four Olympic medals during his decorated career, was received by Athletics Federation of India head Adille Sumariwalla at the Delhi airport this morning.

The British great is currently in the race to become the next President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the visit, it is believed, is part of his campaign to drum up support for that.

"Met Lord Sebastian Coe, President of World Athletics and IOC Member. Discussed our intent to host the 2036 Olympics and Paralympics and our vision for advancing athletics in India from grassroots development to achieving global excellence," Mandaviya posted on 'X' after his meeting with Coe in the afternoon.

The IOC elections are to be held next year. The body is currently headed by Thomas Bach. *—PTI*